

# The Inquirer.

*A Journal of Liberal Religion, Literature, and Social Progress.*

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LONDON, SATURDAY, MAY 21, 1910.

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## OUR CALENDAR.

It is requested that notice of any alteration in the Calendar be sent to the Publisher not later than Thursday Morning.

SUNDAY, May 22.

## LONDON.

Acton, Creffield-road, 11.15 and 7, Rev. H. B. SMITH.  
 Bermondsey, Fort-road, 7, Rev. J. HIPPERSON.  
 Blackfriars Mission and Stamford-street Chapel, 11 and 7, Rev. J. C. BALLANTYNE.  
 Brixton, Unitarian Christian Church, Effra-road, 11, Rev. A. A. CHARLESWORTH; 7, Rev. G. C. CRESSEY, D.D.  
 Child's Hill, All Souls', Weech-road, Finchley-road, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. GEORGE CRITCHLEY, B.A.  
 Croydon, Free Christian Church, Wellesley-road, 11 and 7, Rev. W. J. JUPP.  
 Essex Church, The Mall, Notting Hill Gate, 11 and 7, Rev. FRANK K. FREESTON.  
 Finchley (Church End), Wentworth Hall, Ballard-lane, 6.30, Mr. WALTER RUSSELL.  
 Forest Gate, corner of Dunbar-road, Upton-lane, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. ELLIS.  
 Hackney, New Gravel Pit Church, Chatham-place, 11.15, Rev. R. P. FARLEY, B.A.; 7, Rev. E. W. LUMMIS.  
 Hampstead, Rosslyn-hill Chapel, 11.15 and 6.30, Rev. H. GOW.  
 Harlesden, Willesden High School, Craven Park, 7, Mr. E. CAPLETON.  
 Highgate-hill Unitarian Christian Church, 11, Rev. G. C. CRESSEY, M.A., D.D.; 7, Rev. A. A. CHARLESWORTH.  
 Ilford, High-road, 11 and 7, Rev. W. H. DRUMMOND, B.A.  
 Islington, Unity Church, Upper-street, 11 and 7, Rev. W. TUDOR JONES, Ph.D., F.R.G.S., late of Wellington, New Zealand.  
 Kentish Town, Clarence-road, N.W., 11, Rev. F. HANKINSON; 7, Rev. W. H. ROSE.  
 Kilburn, Quex-road, 11 and 7, Rev. CHARLES ROPER, B.A.  
 Lewisham, Unitarian Christian Church, High-street, 11 and 7, Rev. W. W. CHYNOWETH POPE.  
 Deptford, Church and Mission, Church-street, 6.30.  
 Mansford-street Church and Mission, Bethnal Green, 7, Rev. GORDON COOPER, B.A.  
 Peckham, Avondale-road, 11, Rev. J. A. PEARSON; 6.30, Rev. T. P. SPEDDING.  
 Richmond, Free Church, Ormond-road, 11.15 and 7, Dr. F. W. G. FOAT, D.Litt., M.A.  
 Stoke Newington Green, 11.15 and 7, Rev. DOUGLAS W. ROBSON, B.D.  
 Stratford Unitarian Church, 11, P.S.M., Mr. P. W. STANGRE; 6.30, Rev. JOHN ELLIS.  
 University Hall, Gordon-square, 11.15 and 7, Rev. J. PAGE HOPPS.  
 Wandsworth Unitarian Christian Church, East Hill, 11 and 7, Rev. W. G. TARRANT, B.A.  
 Wimbledon, Smaller Worple Hall, Worple-road, 7, Rev. JOHN HOWARD.  
 Wood Green Unity Church, 11 and 7, Rev. JOSEPH WILSON.  
 Woolwich, Carmel Chapel, Anglesea-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. L. JENKINS JONES.

ABERYSTWYTH, New Street Meeting House, 11 and 6.30. Supply.  
 BATH, Trim-street Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. McDOWELL.  
 BIRMINGHAM, Old Meeting Church, Bristol-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. JOSEPH WOOD.  
 BIRMINGHAM, Church of the Messiah, Broad-street, Rev. JOHN WORSLEY AUSTIN, M.A.  
 BLACKBURN, King William street, near Sudell Cross, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. E. W. SEALY, M.A.  
 BLACKPOOL, Dickson-road, North Shore, 10.45 and 6.30.  
 BLACKPOOL, South Shore Unitarian Free Church, Lytham-road South, 11 and 6.30.  
 BOLTON, Halliwell-road Free Church, 10.45, Scholars' Service; 6.30, Rev. J. ISLAN JONES, M.A.  
 BOURNEMOUTH, Unitarian Church, West Hill-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. J. RUDDLE.  
 BRADFORD, Chapel Lane Chapel, 10.30 and 6.30.  
 BRIGHTON, Free Christian Church, New-road, 11 and 7, Rev. PRIESTLEY PRIME.  
 BUXTON, Hartington-road Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. GEORGE STREET.

CAMBRIDGE, Assembly Hall, Downing-street, 11.30, Rev. E. W. LUMMIS, M.A.  
 CHATHAM, Unitarian Christian Church, Hammond-hill, 11 and 6.30.  
 CHELMSFORD, Unitarian Church, Legg-street, 6.30, Mr. C. F. HINTON, B.A.  
 CHESTER, Matthew Henry's Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. D. JENKIN EVANS.  
 CLIFTON, Oakfield-road Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. RAWLINGS, M.A.  
 DOVER, Adrian-street, near Market-square, 11 and 6.30, Rev. C. A. GINEVER, B.A.  
 DUBLIN, Stephen's Green West, 12, Rev. E. S. HICKS, M.A.  
 EVESHAM, Oat-street Chapel, 11 and 6.30.  
 GATESHEAD, Unity Church, Anniversary, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. MATTHEW R. SCOTT.  
 GORTON, Brookfield Church, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. GEORGE EVANS, M.A.  
 GUILDFORD, Ward-street Church, North-street, 11 and 6.30, Mr. GEORGE WARD.  
 HASTINGS, South Terrace, Queen's-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. S. BURROWS.  
 HORSHAM, Free Christian Church, Worthing-road, 11 and 6.15, Rev. J. J. MARTEN.  
 LEEDS, Mill Hill, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. CHARLES HARGROVE, M.A.  
 LEICESTER, Free Christian Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. KENNETH BOND.  
 LEICESTER, The Great Meeting, 11 and 6.30, Rev. E. I. FRIPP, B.A.  
 LIVERPOOL, Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, 11 and 6.30, Rev. CHARLES CRADDOCK.  
 LIVERPOOL, Hope-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. D. ROBERTS.  
 LIVERPOOL, Ullet-road, Sefton-park, 11, Rev. J. C. ODGERS, B.A.; 6.30, Rev. M. WATKINS.  
 MAIDSTONE, Unitarian Church, Earl-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. ALEXANDER FARQUHARSON.  
 MORETONHAMPTON, Devon, Cross Chapel, 11 and 3, Rev. A. LANCASTER.  
 NEW BRIGHTON and LISCARD, Memorial Church, Manor-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. E. PARRY.  
 NEWPORT, Isle of Wight, 11 and 6.30.  
 OXFORD, Manchester College, 11.30, Prof. G. DAWES HICKS, Litt.D.  
 PORTSMOUTH, High-street Chapel, 11 and 6.45.  
 PORTSMOUTH, St. Thomas-street, 6.45, Rev. T. BOND.  
 PRESTON, Unitarian Chapel, Church-street, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. CHARLES TRAVERS.  
 SCARBOROUGH, Westborough, 10.45 and 6.30, Rev. E. L. H. THOMAS, B.A.  
 SEVENOAKS, Bessell's Green, The Old Meeting House, 11, Rev. J. F. PARMITER.  
 SHEFFIELD, Upper Chapel, 11 and 6.30, Rev. JAMES C. STREET.  
 SIDMOUTH, Old Meeting, High-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. WILLIAM AGAR.  
 SOUTHPORT, Portland-street Church, 11 and 6.30, Rev. W. WILSON.  
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 TORQUAY, Unity Hall, Lower Union-street, 11 and 6.30, Rev. A. E. O'CONNOR, B.D.  
 TUNBRIDGE WELLS, Dudley Institute, Dudley-road, Morning Service (only), 11, Rev. GEORGE STALLWORTHY.  
 WEST KIRBY, Meeting Room, Grange-road, 11 and 6.30, Rev. H. W. HAWKES.

## HAMBURG.

The Church of the Liberal Faith, Logenhaus, Welckerstrasse, 11, Rev. GARDNER PRESTON.

## CAPETOWN.

Free Protestant (Unitarian) Church, Hout-street, 6.45, Rev. RAMSDEN BALMFORTH.

## MARRIAGE.

PENWARDEN—CHANCELLOR.—On May 12, at Highgate Unitarian Christian Church, by the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth, Stanley Peter, younger son of Peter Penwarden, of Newent, Glos., to Hilda Mary, eldest daughter of Henry G. Chancellor, M.P., of Hornsey-rise, London, N.

## DEATH.

ROGERS.—On the 15th May, at 6, Wydehurst-terrace, Addiscombe, Mary A. Rogers, late of 66, Southdown-avenue, Brighton.

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Advertisements should arrive not later than Twelve o'clock on THURSDAY to appear the same week.



# THE INQUIRER.

*A Journal of Liberal Religion, Literature, and Social Progress.*

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*\*\* All letters and manuscripts for the Editor should be sent to 23, Cannon-place, Hampstead, N.W. Communications for the Business Manager should be sent to 3, Essex-street, Strand, W.C.*

### NOTES OF THE WEEK.

BEFORE these lines appear in print the King's funeral will have taken place, and the sad national drama of the past fortnight will have come to an end. "A good King," said Sydney Smith, "must not go to his grave without that reverence from the people which his virtues deserved." This reverence has been duly paid. The escort of kings, the pageantry of a great ceremonial, the sorrowing crowds bereft of a ruler and a friend—nothing was lacking that could express homage and affection. And at the heart of it all, almost hidden by these solemn splendours, the utter simplicity of death.

\* \* \*

AT the funeral of Queen Victoria many people felt the incongruity of the great military display, and the absence of any recognition of the arts of peace which are the strength and glory of nations. In these matters precedent rules, and so King Edward, like his predecessors, has gone to his rest amid the booming of guns and the flashing of swords. But the time has surely come when a more honourable place should be assigned in national ceremonial for the representatives of civic life, the heads of our universities, the captains of industry, and the leaders of the people in art and literature and song.

\* \* \*

THE question of a modification of the King's Oath, so as to remove the words

which are felt to be insulting to the faith of Roman Catholics, has again come up for public discussion, and it is understood that the Government is likely to move in the matter. It ought not to be difficult to find a fresh form of words which will secure the Protestant succession without stigmatising the Mass as "superstitious and idolatrous." While our Roman Catholic fellow countrymen must naturally feel most strongly on the subject, we should like to assure them of the sympathy of many people like ourselves, who also feel aggrieved at words which are inconsistent with Christian charity and the respect due to conscientious differences of opinion.

\* \* \*

WE welcome Mr. Bernard Shaw's sensible letter to *The Times* on the subject of national mourning. He pleads for an inexpensive symbol, like the wearing of a violet ribbon, in the interest of people of small means. It is, as he points out, a real difficulty and hardship when public etiquette requires a whole school suddenly to appear in black clothes. We hope that the matter will be considered in the right quarter with a view to defining "decent mourning" in future in the simple terms which he suggests.

\* \* \*

WE also agree with Mr. Shaw in his dislike of a whole population, and especially its children, in black, as ugly and inappropriate. "Why our schools," he writes, "should be deliberately made hideous with black because an honourable public career has come to its close in all peace, fulfilment, and cheerful memory is not apparent to any healthy-minded person." Gorgeous military uniforms are

not considered out of place, even at a funeral. Why, then, should the vast civilian population be condemned to these dismal trappings of woe?

\* \* \*

THE *Nation* last Saturday gave the following impression of King George—"practically in the words of a Minister"—which will be read with deep interest:—"He behaved to us all with extreme kindness and consideration. He sent for those Cabinet Ministers who were in town on Monday, one by one, beginning with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and one could not but be impressed with the stress he laid on the constitutional side of his duties and position. Of King Edward he spoke with deep and manly emotion, saying that he had been more a brother than a father to him. We all thought him frank and straightforward, full of desire to do his best for the country."

\* \* \*

THE appalling colliery disaster at Whitehaven has evoked deep and widespread sympathy, coupled with admiration for the splendid heroism of the rescuers, who refused to desist from their efforts till their fire helmets were almost melted by the heat. Happily there seems good reason to believe that the entombed miners must soon have lost consciousness and met with a speedy death. No branch of our industrial army runs such terrible risks for the public good, and the least we can do is to respond to the appeal for material help for the widow and the orphan.

\* \* \*

OWING to the suspension of business on the day of the King's Funeral, our report of the anniversary meetings, which



have been held at Essex Hall during the past week, is necessarily very imperfect, and an important section of it must be deferred till next week. There has been a good attendance to take part in the very full programme, and many greetings of old friends. Workers from lonely posts of duty have felt the kindling of a larger fellowship, and the encouragement of common sympathies. Perhaps in no other way are these recurring anniversaries so fruitful of good.

\* \* \*

At the Spring Assembly of the Progressive League, which was held at the King's Weigh House on Monday, the recommendation of the president, the Rev. R. J. Campbell, that in future the League be known as the "Liberal Christian League" was accepted. It is not in reality a new departure, for in the constitution the first object of the League is stated to be "to provide a common meeting ground and fellowship for those who are in sympathy with Liberal Christianity and all progressive religious thought." It has simply been felt desirable to announce its spiritual character in its title, and in this way to emphasise the fact that the fellowship of Liberal Christians is wider than any programme of reform or method of activity. We think that the League should appeal in many ways to the readers of THE INQUIRER, and we hope from time to time to give them information about its operations. We commend it cordially to their active co-operation and their earnest prayers.

\* \* \*

WE are sorry to see that the Doncaster Chapel case has come before the courts. On Friday of last week an application was made in the Chancery Division before Mr. Justice Joyce, and counsel who appeared on behalf of the Rev. Percy Jones gave an undertaking that he would not preach in the chapel for the next two Sundays. If the case is pushed to an issue, it may be fraught with very grave consequences for places of worship all over the country. We hope that in that event Parliament will intervene and decide the real equity of the situation, as it did recently to secure the liberties of the United Free Church of Scotland, and in 1844, when it passed the Dissenters' Chapels Act to curb the power of the dead hand upon the progress of living opinion.

\* \* \*

MANY friends in London this week have heard with serious concern of Principal Carpenter's accident. His horse fell with him when he was out riding. Fortunately, the injuries are not serious. It is good news that it was his intention to resume his lectures this week.

## THE CHURCH'S BEST ASSET.

By REV. J. J. WRIGHT, F.R.S.L.

"I said, I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed; and, lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea."—ECCLESIASTICUS xxiv. 31.

THESE suggestive words of the ancient Hebrew sage were a parable to him. They may serve, even more suggestively, albeit in a different sense, as a fruitful parable to us. What would the Christian Churches of to-day not give, if, as regards their own spiritual life, and their power of spiritualising the world, they could only feel that their brook was indeed becoming a river, and their river rising and spreading like the sea? Surely that is the divine intention! And why should it not be so? There is, at any rate, one natural way—not the only way but the surest—in which, here and now, quickly and effectively, the Churches could most mightily freshen the higher life of the world, and send that "river of God" flowing through men's hearts with something of the fulness and buoyancy of the sea. There is, I say, a way—which more and more seems to me the chief way, and the appointed way. We all know it! We know the fact so well that it is a commonplace, and our very knowledge of it makes it all the more difficult to redeem the fact from a commonplace and turn it into an inspiration. We all know that

### THE YOUNG HUMAN LIFE OF THE WORLD

holds in it, at this moment, the immediate future, for good or ill. There it is, under our very eyes, at our very hands, in city and village, in home and street—that palpable, palpitating, multi-millionfold young human life—there it is, not ideal but real, as God and man have thus far made it. The next fifty years of our native land, the next fifty years of our Churches, are involved in what this actual young life now is, and in what we are going to make of it.

Well, here might be matter for grave consideration. And it is but simple truth to say that young human life in the midst of modern civilisation is exposed to great and subtle dangers, to dark and serious evils. Nor can many of us, either as parents, citizens, or members of Churches, avoid experiencing, at times, some painful searchings of heart as to whether we have not been greatly guilty of negligence, if not of unwisdom, towards the rising generation of youths and maidens, boys and girls, and little children.

Moreover, on the other hand, we may all be ready to confess that, neither in the home, the school, nor the Church is young human life, by any means, so easy to help and guide as once it seemed to be. Nor is it likely to grow easier just yet. A young human life to-day is such a tingling piece of vitality as mankind until now never had to handle. "How God must love us!" exclaims a great moral and spiritual worker, "He gives us such hard problems to solve!"

But see! All these difficulties are the mere *incidentals* of our present stage of human evolution. The *essential* fact is that

\* The Anniversary Sermon on behalf of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, preached in Essex Church, Kensington, on Wednesday, May 18, 1910.

never before in the world's history was young human life more wholesome, more precious, or more promising. What a power! What a power! What a power it is, what a power it may be, to put the living kingdom of God into the actual kingdoms of man, and to bring the idealism of Christ into the realities of our business and politics—into our entire life, civic and spiritual. Those who live in closest contact with the varied and virile young life of to-day, those who know it best and work the hardest for it, are the fullest of hope and confidence, not only in regard to it, but in regard to the nation of which this young life is the future.

Now, according to Louis Stevenson, "the world is so full of a number of things" that, as Sydney Smith once said, the things which any of us don't know would fill a very large book! I wonder how many of us realise the simple fact that the bulk of the young human life of this country is just now in its Sunday-schools—yea, in its Sunday-schools in far larger numbers than even in its day schools. I wonder how many of us are aware that fully one-sixth of the population of this country is in its Sunday-schools, and that, as the eminent naval officer, Sir Nathaniel Barnaby has recently pointed out, "the Sunday-school teachers of our country are more in number than all our soldiers and sailors put together!" That is a startlingly exhilarating fact. Our soldiers and sailors cost the nation sixty millions a year. Our Sunday-school teachers cost the nation nothing. But, as Sir Nathaniel says, they *give* to the young life of the nation "the fear of God and the basal elements of morality."

Yes, and the bulk of this young life—not in decreasing but in increasing numbers, as I shall show you—is actually in our Sunday-schools. Making all due allowances for the children and young people of the higher and so-called educated classes who do not dream of going to Sunday-school—though *why*, I do not know, they have so *much* need for it, and, above all others, so obvious a *duty* to it—the Sunday-school yet remains the chief great channel of this nation's young vitality. Would to God that we could strike the mind and the imagination of all who care for England or religion with this simple, momentous fact and idea—namely, that, in larger volume than the adult life of our churches—ay, in larger volume than through our day schools, to say nothing of any other institutions—the main stream of our nation's young life is even now pouring into and passing through the Sunday-schools of this land.

Of course, all is not well with the Sunday-school. But, is all well with the Churches? Is all well with the social life of our time? Is all well, at this moment, with any nation? "God's in His heaven," no doubt.

### BUT IS ALL RIGHT WITH OUR WORLD?

Here, again, let us patiently recognise that all these things—the Sunday-school among them—are in process of evolution. Neither by their beginnings, nor by any phase of their development, can we judge of anything in Nature, in life, or in institutions. Looked at cynically, or unsympathetically, or as mere dull, irksome, unrelated details, most things in this world—Sunday-schools included—may be made to seem small and scrubby! It is



only some spiritual glimpse of plan and purpose in nature or in life, and "the glory of their going on," which can ever give us some sense of the meaning they may have in the mind of God.

Have we got that glimpse in regard to the Sunday-school? Have the Churches got that glimpse as regards their own Sunday-schools? A certain novelist, whose name I forget (and better so!) makes one of his characters say of another: "She hasn't a soul above a Sunday-school teacher!" Had that fiction writer, or anyone who thinks like him, even the glimmer of a glimpse of the fact that, many and varied and great as have been mankind's philanthropies, the greatest of these is the Sunday-school; and that, among human achievements for the good of the race, next to the home and the Church, the Sunday-school stands pre-eminent?

Now, I am free to admit, in regard to Sunday-schools, as in regard to Churches, that, although they were never more needed, they were, surely, never more difficult to carry on than now. The Sunday-school is a bigger thing than ever, and of infinitely more importance to the Churches; and yet less and less do the well-to-do, the educated, the leisured and the privileged seem willing to "take their share of hardness" as "good soldiers of Jesus Christ" in this regular training of the young for the moral and spiritual warfare of life. And so, increasing in numbers though it be, the Sunday-school of to-day is up against ever so many modern difficulties. What then! The late Lord Kelvin used to say to his students of science: "Gentlemen, when you meet a difficulty you are on the eve of a discovery." Is this going to happen in regard to the Sunday-school? I can well believe that it will. Nay, in a very real measure, it has already happened. Within the last five or ten years, some of the Sunday-schools' foremost workers, of nearly all denominations throughout the world, have faced the difficulties, and, fired with fresh hopes and dreams for the rising generation, have discovered, in the Sunday-school even *as it is*, amazing possibilities; and are themselves now ardently and wisely at work building slowly up "the Sunday-school of to-morrow," thus building, as surely, the Church and the nation of the day to follow.

This is not the occasion on which to tell of methods. Suffice it to say, in passing, that the men and women, who are bringing in the new era of the Sunday-school, are not mere enthusiasts; but, while among the heartiest, they are also among the "brainiest" of workers for young humanity. The science of our nature's moral and spiritual life in its juvenile and adolescent stages, and the humanly-divine art of helping it along to arrive at its best, they have caused to be known and used as never before. Already there has arisen a small library of most helpful, illuminating, stimulating literature; while the evidence, which comes to us from many quarters, as to what is being actually accomplished on these new lines is, in some cases, of thrilling interest.

Now, it is very significant to me, and I hope to you, that this new movement for the helping of the world's young life is running through the Sunday-school as its channel. Yet, after all, that is quite

natural. As a more than a hundred-year-old settled channel, along which the mainstream of young life has run, there is nothing yet which can compete with the Sunday-school. Its day, its spirit, its memories, its influence, the sentiments and associations which have gathered about it; the scores of millions of lives which, at their most impressionable period, the Sunday-school has touched with some sense of diviner things—all this, and more, goes to make it naturally the institution, of all others, which those who care for the religious life and the corporate life of the future should foster, and utilise, and elevate, and dignify. The great and pressing need just now is that the civic world and the Christian Churches themselves should vividly realise the fact that the Sunday-school is not some separate, casual, transient, negligible item, but that it is a huge, concrete, and veritably organic portion of the nation and the Church—the younger end of both; the

#### BEST AND BIGGEST ASSET OF THE UPCOMING CHURCH.

and of the nation yet to be. Is not the realisation of this fact greatly needed? Let us see. What is the bitter cry of all the Churches just now? "The great and persistent lament," says Rev. Richard Roberts (the author of a valuable little volume to which I am much indebted, and which I commend to all, "The Church and the Next Generation" \*), "of the Christian leaders of our time is the indifference of the masses. Church attendance censuses and other investigations have given us alarming statistical evidence of the extent of this indifference. It is probably no exaggeration to say that four-fifths of the people of this country are not in any kind of vital association with the Churches. Mark you! Four people out of every five *indifferent*. Yes, but their indifference is not confined to religion. For example, there are some seven or eight millions of wage-earners in our land who *might* be members of trade unions, but the membership falls short of two millions, and is nearer a million and a-half. So that there is an indifference of some four-fifths of the people, not only to religion, but even to the possibilities of their own social and material betterment. Of course, I am quite aware—as is the writer I refer to—that one element in this indifference might open up to us the whole subject of the Church's obligation in regard to social reform, and no one of us can deny "the acuteness and urgency of that obligation who knows anything of the hindrances to the progress of the kingdom of God which are entailed by the pressure of modern social conditions." There is, of course, also much indifference due to culpably low views of life. And this prevails as much—probably a good deal more—among the rich than among the poor.

Be all that as it may, I think you will see that what I am specially driving at to-day is the church's obligation in regard to the *spiritual* life of the world. Of the Church's duty in regard to that there can be no dispute or question. Whatever other work the Christian Church may be able to undertake—and to my mind it has the right, if it only had the time, to under-

take many other things—yet its proper, its primary, its unique function is to increase the *spiritual power* of mankind—always using that word "spiritual" in the widest and highest sense, as including life and character, manhood and womanhood; yea, and even more than that, more than language can ever express, that mighty, mystic light and uplift of which, in rare moments, we have all been conscious, when, perchance, there has come even to us "a vision and faculty divine," and from which there has flowed a greater gentleness and justice and peace into our common round, our daily task.

Now, if this—or anything like it—be the Church's undoubted work, there are three facts or factors to which I would call your attention as bearing momentously, and very practically, upon the question as to

#### WHAT THE CHURCHES ARE GOING TO MAKE OF THEIR BEST ASSET—THE SUNDAY-SCHOOLS.

(1) The first fact is very discouraging to students of the problem of indifference. It arises out of the recent investigations over a wide and varied area of well-trained American and other thinkers, whose names are too numerous to mention, who have devoted themselves to the careful yet sympathetic study of religious experience. And it amounts to this, that a man seems to lose susceptibility to the influences which produce religious awakening after he has passed the age of twenty-five years. This does not mean, of course, that a man ceases to be religious after twenty-five years of age, or that he ceases to grow in the religious life. But it does mean that after he has reached twenty-five, or even twenty, a man is altogether more impervious to spiritual impressions. It does not mean that a man never becomes religious after twenty-five, because there are well-known instances of this in most districts; although it is a matter of common knowledge that all the great united missions of recent years have left no appreciable mark upon the life of the people at large. The plain though disheartening fact which emerges out of a careful study by careful students of the world's religious experiences is this—that after twenty-five, and even after twenty years of age, the average man more or less *loses the very susceptibility* whereby he becomes, if he becomes at all, a consciously and voluntarily religious being. Disheartening, I said. And yet, if it be a fact, it is in the nature of things, and therefore within the divine order; and we must learn to recognise the fact, and work accordingly. In other words, we must as Churches take care to cultivate and foster the spiritual life of the young at the age when, evidently, God intends.

(2) This leads me to the second fact, which, happily, is all encouraging, namely, that the same investigations go to show that under the age of twenty, and especially from the ages of fourteen, or even twelve, up to eighteen, young human nature is naturally most susceptible to religious influence. Naturally, not artificially; anything artificial or forced is wrong. But religion itself is right. Not adult religion for babes. By no means. There is where the Christian Church has made a huge mistake—trying to cram adult religion into a child-soul. No, a child's religion must



be a child's; and a boy's religion must be a boy's; and the two are as different as child and boy; even as both are different from the religion of the full-grown man. Child and boy, and girl and youth and maiden have each a natural and God-given capacity for religion—religion which, in essence, is a sense of God, which may be vague or vivid—a feeling of relation to Him and a life and spirit which are, less or more, the outcome of that sense and feeling. This is a religion which God has given every child and youth the capacity to enjoy—yea, to *enjoy* the sense that God knows him and loves him; and this sense, by no convulsions or artificialities, but as naturally as it learns to eat, and read, and laugh, and love, and live, this, I say, is that consciousness of God into which not so much the instruction, as the atmosphere and the influence of the Church and its members, *ought* to lead every little child and budding youth and maiden. That is the time—the natural time. Missed then, it may never be recovered. And observe! It is because the Churches have lamentably missed this vital fact hitherto that 80 per cent. of those who have passed through the Sunday-schools are now outside the Churches! And as, to a large extent, these have also lost much of the religious susceptibility which they once naturally had, we have sadly to confess that, “with all our preaching, we do not appreciably affect the mass of the people,” four-fifths of whom are now outside all Churches. But see! (3) Here is something to cheer us. It is a curious fact that the churches do get into their Sunday-schools about four out of every five of the people's children. Do you notice the co-incidence? While four-fifths of the adult population remain outside the churches, four-fifths of the children come inside the Sunday-schools. These are they who have within them that fresh susceptibility for any such religion as there is going to be in the immediate future. These are the Church's greatest opportunity. On no other field of operations, in no other direction that it can look, has the Church such a chance.

#### FOUR-FIFTHS OF THE PEOPLE'S CHILDREN.

And, do you know how many that means? It is a number which nearly equals the voting citizens of the United Kingdom. And it is a number which is not decreasing, but increasing. There are decreases, of course, in some schools and in some denominations. But other schools and other denominations (of which our own is one) show considerable increases. The Roll Call for 1909 of Sunday-school scholars of the Protestant denominations shows an increase of 25,101, with an increase of teachers to the number of 2,412. But I have not yet told you the grand total. The Roll Call for 1909 shows that in the Sunday-schools of the United Kingdom we have of teachers 710,198, and of scholars 7,400,756—“more teachers than all our soldiers and sailors put together,” and almost as many scholars as electors in Great Britain and Ireland.

Think for one moment what all this means. Just consider! Including youths and maidens, over seven millions of children and young people—a larger number than with all our pains and penalties we can get into our day schools—over seven millions of living bodies and souls just *come* into our

Sunday-schools, and, with trusting faith, submit themselves for years to such processes as we may deem best for them. From one point of view the fact is truly pathetic, but from another, is it not suggestive of incalculable possibilities? These seven millions are the men and women of a very few years hence—the workpeople, possibly the masters; the buyers and sellers; the voters, possibly the rulers; certainly the citizens of district, town, or nation; the Sunday-school teachers and superintendents, the members, possibly the ministers of our churches; the officials and committees of our religious, philanthropic, and educational institutions; in short, these seven million children and young people, now in our Sunday-schools, are the actual material out of which is to come most of all that will be best in the England just ahead of us. And what that future, in hearts, and homes, and country is going to be, the Churches, through their Sunday-schools, more than in any other way, have it in their power to determine.

Listen: “There was once a village teacher who looked down into the earnest eyes of a boy who had come to learn religion at school for the first time. ‘What is your name?’ said the teacher. And that boy replied, ‘My name is Jesus. My mother is Mary, the carpenter’s wife.’” Yes, through the religious school at Nazareth even *he* came; and through the Sunday-schools of England there might yet come more than men dream, did the Churches but realise what their schools truly are and could be!

But are not the Churches feeling and doing all this? Let us be quite honest. Does anybody here, who truly knows anything about it, really think so? No one values more highly than I do the good done by our Sunday-schools, their teachers, and workers. If I were asked to say which is doing the greater good, the Sunday-school or the Church, I should actually hesitate to reply; while I boldly challenge anyone to tell me of any other two institutions on earth which are helping more people to be decently good. As for Sunday-school teachers—uncompelled, unpaid, often unthanked, and unrecognised,—I regard them as the noblest band of philanthropists of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. But even good must not hinder us from striving after greater good. Let us fully and gratefully admit the good. But does the best worker in our Sunday-schools feel that the Churches are making the most of their amazing opportunity? Ah, yes. There are workers working themselves to death. Such workers and dear friends—as able and noble as ever breathed—some of us have recently lost. But this only adds intensity and poignancy to the call of our Sunday-school upon the Churches. See!

#### THE PROBLEM BEFORE US IS THE TEACHER.

There is the solution, summed up in a sentence. Other things are needed, as I shall mention in a moment. But it is the teacher that gives them value. Given the teacher—I would rather say the *helper* of young life to life—and all else follows. Of late years, moved by tender sympathy for suffering humanity, young ladies of

leisure have, by no easy means, learnt the art of nursing the sick, to whom they might give their services. All honour to them! It has probably never occurred to their sisters to go and learn the art of teaching—if it be only the delightful play-work of the Kinder-garten—and then to come and use that art among the children of the Sunday-school, thereby doing a work that even angels might envy, and winning a place and a power, an esteem and an affection, such as I believe no other public work on earth ever brings. And that is only one of the things the Churches might do. Hear Sir George White: “We spend pounds to reclaim the masses, we spend pence to train the child. £10,000 is needed for a church for adults, and only £2,000 for a school for the children. The Church is put well to the front—the Sunday-school behind—or underneath! There are numberless colleges to train a paid ministry to preach to the fathers and mothers, not one such college for teachers of children; and, in most colleges, no class in which the student can learn the art of teaching, with the result that few of our preachers can do more than ‘say a few words’ to the young, and they had sometimes better be omitted, because they are unsuited either in manner or matter. The teaching staff of our schools rarely contains the best that the Church *could* give. The University trained men and women may not be very numerous in our congregations, but how many of them are found in our schools?”

May I venture to ask a few questions? Do any of the Churches provide their Sunday-schools with a sufficient number of efficient teachers and workers? Do the Churches show that they think great things and hope great things of their Sunday-schools? Do more than 10 per cent. of the adult members of the Churches know anything about the Sunday-school? Does the Christian Church realise that while it may be compassing Heaven and earth to make one proselyte, God is actually putting on to its very doorstep, nay, into its very house, four out of every five of all the children of the world, ready and willing to be its disciples? Yet does the Church know that, slipping through its fingers, of this precious material which comes into its hands is a continuous leakage of 80 per cent.? Those questions, I assure you, are not put by way of mere criticism or condemnation, much less of pessimism, for I, personally, never had more faith in the possibilities of the Sunday-school than to-day. Am I not in all this accentuating a new call upon the Churches to raise their ideals of the Sunday-school; to see in their Sunday-schools such an opportunity as the Churches have nowhere else in this world; and to undertake willingly, yea, sacrificially, larger enterprises and larger tasks in and through their Sunday-schools? The call is for more workers; for better-equipped workers; for better organisation altogether. If the Church once realises that in these seven million children and young people now within its walls it has the moral and spiritual future in its very own hands, there is nothing the Church will not spend, there is no change the Church will not make, even, it may be, to the



complete altering of the emphasis of its own work; that work, which is now mainly for the life and comfort of adults, being possibly changed to a work *mainly* for the life and conduct and character of the young. The Church's adults are already saved, or else hardly worth saving—but these more than seven million children, they are the future, and, through them, the Churches can make that future good. The future, not merely of the Churches; God has set us a bigger task than that. It is no less than to make a better world. And there is nothing which that world ever more needs than moral and spiritual power—moral and spiritual power whereof, here and now, the Churches are meant to be the chief generators. And there is no way, surely, in which the Churches can so effectively increase their own efficiency for this, their unique task, as by making the young life of this Realm now within its Sunday-schools immensely more efficient for all the civic and spiritual life there is and ought to be. May the God of all power and wisdom and love persuade us to say with the parable:—

“I will water my best garden, and will water abundantly my garden bed.”

Then to make the glorious discovery:—

“And, lo, my brook became a river, and my river became a sea.”

## THE SUNDAY SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.

### ANNUAL MEETING.

THE seventy-sixth annual report of the Sunday School Association records considerable activity during the past year. Referring to the pretty general complaint of a decline in numbers it says:—

The Sunday School Union took up the task of endeavouring to ascertain how far this decline was real by obtaining the attendance numbers for the two years 1908 and 1909. The figures published will be of interest to our superintendents and teachers and are as follows:—

#### ENGLAND AND WALES—24 Denominations.

	1908.	1909.
Teachers .....	634,733	637,188
Scholars .....	6,624,776	6,649,320

#### SCOTLAND—15 Denominations.

Teachers .....	57,430	57,408
Scholars .....	591,395	592,001

#### IRELAND—11 Denominations.

Teachers .....	18,035	18,014
Scholars .....	184,585	184,534

The report goes on to say that of all the denominations which practically cover the Protestant Sunday schools, 11 report a decrease while 14 show an increase. The schools of the leading Evangelical Free Churches show decline, whereas those of the Church of England, Unitarian, and others mentioned, show increases. An analysis has been made of some of the returns, which shows that the decline, where it appears, may be put down to the following causes:—

(1) The weak teaching and conduct of the intermediate classes. More attention, it is said, is being paid to the infant and senior classes, whereas the classes between

have not fared so well, and the leakage has been mainly there.

(2) The popularity of the P.S.A. and men's brotherhoods takes the teachers away.

(3) Modern craze for outdoor amusements.

(4) Removals causing a break in influence of school and church.

(5) Scholars joining unattached mission schools, of which the attendance returns are not given.

(6) In many cases the decline is only an apparent one, due to registration being now more perfect than in past years.

The report of the general position of the Sunday-schools of the country is by no means unfavourable, and the committee were glad to note in it mention that the Unitarians have maintained a continuous increase for thirty years in the senior scholars' department.

The report records that in June last a teachers' session was held at Hayfield, Derbyshire, organised by the Manchester District Sunday School Association in co-operation with the committee. The lectures and programme had been carefully prepared, and the whole proceedings were enjoyed and appreciated by the students attending. When the next summer school is held in the North a larger attendance of teachers is confidently anticipated.

The total receipts for the year amounted to £1,102 15s. 6d. and the expenditure to £1,118 5s. 11d., leaving, therefore, an adverse balance of £15 10s. 5d. The treasurer is glad to be able to mention that the book-room sales are £20 more than in 1908, and also that the amount of the subscription list has been increased.

The publishing department has not been very active, and no fixed plan, such as would mean a graduated set of volumes to suit the various ages of scholars, has been adopted, nor has it been thought advisable. The books of the Association, however, have been classified, and a list published of those suited for infant classes, intermediate classes, and for the senior classes. This plan will enable teachers to give systematic courses of lessons.

The *Sunday School Quarterly* has also been started, and it is hoped that it will become widely known. It is edited by the Rev. J. Arthur Pearson, and its aim is that it should be the teachers' "own" magazine, a means of mutual help and a medium of communication between the committee and the schools.

The arrangements for the seventh Oxford teachers' session, to be held on July 1 to 9, 1910, are now nearly completed, and a circular letter will shortly be issued to the schools inviting the attendance of their teachers. Principal Carpenter will receive the students, and conduct the opening and the closing services of the session. Two courses of lectures will be given, the one on subjects appertaining to the religious life and the culture of the teacher, and the second devoted to subjects of practical teaching.

### CONFERENCE AND MEETING.

A CONFERENCE was held on Tuesday morning between the committee of the Association and the delegates from the various District Societies, with a view to

ventilating suggestions for increasing the practical usefulness of the Association.

Luncheon followed at the Holborn Restaurant, and was largely attended. Mr. Howard Young, the president, was in the chair, and offered a cordial welcome to friends from a distance. To this the veteran worker, Mr. John Chadwick, of Manchester, responded.

The annual meeting was held at Essex Hall in the afternoon. Before proceeding to the usual business, the president submitted the following resolution, which was passed in reverent silence:—

“We hereby tender to Queen Alexandra, King George, the Queen, and the Royal Family our dutiful and deep sympathy in the loss they have sustained by the death of our beloved Sovereign King Edward. We share with their Royal Highnesses the sense of the very great personal loss they have sustained, and earnestly pray that God in His mercy will in due time lighten the burden of their grief. We rejoice in the memory of one who proved himself a true King. King Edward won for himself an enduring place in the hearts of the citizens of all countries, by his devotion to the constitution, to the welfare of his people, to the cause of suffering humanity, and pre-eminently by his devotion to peace and goodwill throughout the world.”

A resolution of loyal and earnest welcome to King George V. on his accession to the throne was also passed.

Mr. W. Blake Odgers, jun., then presented the statement of accounts, and in doing so appealed for an increase of subscriptions, especially in the number of subscribers of small amounts.

The hon. secretary, Mr. Ion Pritchard, followed with some remarks on the special features of the annual report. He referred in very sympathetic terms to the personal losses which the Association had sustained during the past year, particularly in the death of Mr. S. S. Tayler and the Rev. S. A. Steinthal.

The adoption of the reports was moved from the chair and seconded by the Rev. H. Fisher Short. The latter referred to the advice once given by the Rev. R. J. Campbell recommending an inquirer about suitable books to turn his attention to the publications of the Association.

On the motion of the Rev. A. W. Fox, seconded by the Rev. C. M. Wright, Mrs. H. Enfield Dowson was elected president for the ensuing year, and the other officers and the committee were reappointed with thanks for their past services.

### MISS E. R. MURRAY ON THE RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD.

After an adjournment for tea, the president introduced Miss Murray to the meeting, and in doing so he said that all the best tendencies of modern thought seemed to culminate in what was said and done by Frederick Froebel, the man who invented for the Germans the word kindergarten, and that we, having failed to translate the word into English, had adopted it wholesale. Some of our best educationalists admitted that they did not understand what Froebel had written but he had no doubt Miss Murray had sufficiently understood Froebel's writing to shake up their thoughts on education, and he called upon her for her paper.



Miss E. R. Murray, of the Maria Grey Training College, London, gave a long and deeply interesting paper on "Froebel and the Religious Development of the Child." No one is satisfied, she said, with the progress we are at present making, which means we are all of us striving to learn. In matters of education we are in a restless state. In a report you have said that as the years go on the Sunday school will be called upon to do more responsible work. This is a serious position. She stood, of course, for trained teachers. But she went beyond the old idea, which was that the teacher knew more than the child and so could teach, but now they felt that the teacher must know the child as well as the subject. A course of instruction in Biblical knowledge would inform the mind, but that is only half of the battle. The mind of the child must be understood. A doctor understands the body before he begins to study medicine. So must it be with the person who desires to teach. She used the illustration of the tadpole becoming the frog and the caterpillar the butterfly; the child was equally different from the man. Therefore the child should not be treated as a little man. Even outwardly he is different. His head is larger and his limbs are different in proportion, but the most important difference is the brain. She disagreed with many hymns that were to be found in our hymn books, as for instance,

"Lord, thy children guide and keep,  
As with feeble steps they press  
On the pathway, rough and steep,  
Through this weary wilderness.

What child has thought this? She thought none. The point, then, that we have to remember is that we must give to a developing organism just what it needs at the stage at which it has arrived. What the child needs is activity—play, play, play. It was because Froebel was a biologist that he founded the kindergarten, which is established upon the theory of play. She believed in that, but she doubted the usefulness of pretending to act Biblical stories. Even children find something different in these to other stories. Indeed, these should always be sacred; set apart. Reverence must always be communicated from one human being to another. Instead of attempting to teach the child gratitude, she would sooner give the child opportunities of service. Quoting from Froebel, all special rewards were deprecated, though she did not object to presents direct from the teacher to the child. She had not the least doubt that the Bible was a means, but not the only means, of religious education, quite apart from any theories of special inspiration, in which she had no faith. The Bible is the literature of a people who had faith in righteousness, and she believed that though we look at it from a different point of view, that it will continue to have a deeper significance.

Dr. F. W. G. Foat was sure all had greatly enjoyed listening to Miss Murray's paper, though he could not quite accept her parallel of tadpoles and frogs and children and grown up people. Further discussion on the subject took place. The proceedings closed with a hearty vote of thanks to Miss Murray and to all who had contributed to the usefulness and success of the meeting, which was moved by Mr.

P. J. Hargreaves (Burnley), and seconded by Rev. C. A. Ginever, B.A. (Dover).

#### LIST OF MINISTERS ATTENDING THE MEETINGS AT ESSEX HALL DURING THE PAST WEEK.

F. Allen, A. R. Andrae, W. Copeland Bowie, S. S. Brettell, J. A. Brinkworth, W. H. Burgess, S. Burrows, W. T. Bushrod, G. Carter, A. A. Charlesworth, W. R. Clark-Lewis, J. Walter Cock, G. Cooper, G. C. Cressey, G. Critchley, J. Park Davies, R. K. Davis, Rudolf Davis, A. H. Dolphin, H. Enfield Dowson, Dr. J. Drummond, R. B. Drummond, W. H. Drummond, John Ellis, D. Delta Evans, D. Jenkin Evans, M. Evans, T. M. Falconer, R. P. Farley, A. Farquharson, R. Finnerty, A. W. Fox, F. K. Freeston, W. E. George, C. A. Ginever, A. Golland, H. Gow, Alfred Hall, F. Hall, W. C. Hall, F. Hankinson, C. Hargrove, W. Harrison, C. Harvey-Cook, James Harwood, E. S. Hicks, J. B. Higham, Rowland Hill, J. Hipperson, T. J. Jenkins, F. H. Jones, Simon Jones, W. Tudor Jones, W. J. Jupp, B. Lister, E. W. Lummis, A. J. Marchant, S. H. Mellone, S. A. Mellor, John Moore, Philemon Moore, R. Newell, J. F. Parmiter, E. E. Parkes, A. E. Parry, G. H. Patterson, G. A. Payne, J. A. Pearson, A. G. Peaston, C. E. Pike, W. W. C. Pope, P. Prime, H. Rawlings, R. S. Redfern, C. E. Reed, W. H. Rose, M. Rowe, M. R. Scott, A. H. Shelley, H. F. Short, H. B. Smith, T. P. Spedding, J. C. Street, J. E. Stronge, F. Summers, A. Sutcliffe, E. Thackray, J. M. Lloyd Thomas, A. Thornhill, W. G. Topping, J. Toye, W. J. B. Tranter, C. Travers, W. L. Tucker, W. F. Turland, G. H. Vance, G. Ward, H. Warnock, W. A. Weatherall, J. Wilson, W. Wilson, W. Wooding, Joseph Worthington, J. J. Wright, C. M. Wright, I. Wrigley, J. Howard, J. Page Hopps, C. Roper, W. G. Tarrant.

#### THE ESSEX HALL LECTURE, 1910.

ON Tuesday evening there was a large audience to hear the Essex Hall Lecture. The Rev. W. G. Tarrant chose for his subject "The Story and Significance of the Unitarian Movement."

Mr. John Harrison was in the chair, and he was accompanied on the platform by Professor Bonet-Maury, Dr. Fleischer, representing the Protestantbond of Holland, Dr. Drummond, of Oxford, Mr. H. Chatfield Clarke, and the Rev. W. Copeland Bowie.

The Rev. W. G. Tarrant was loudly applauded on rising to deliver his lecture, which demanded and received close attention throughout. We are able to present our readers with the following summary:—

The present time is specially interesting in a story far from closed—the story of the "Unitarian Movement." With the twentieth century has begun a remarkable series of international congresses, in which Unitarians and others in practical sympathy with them have realised their common aims and duties. The term "Unitarian" is here used only for the sake of convenience, its connotation being readily grasped in spite of no precise definitions. It is applied to a "Movement" obviously extensive, and not rigorously bounded by sect or

church limits. The fact of "mobility" is a special characteristic; but orthodoxy also moves, and is not to-day what it was ages ago.

The story is conveniently associated with three dates, 1604, 1704, 1804—the death years of three men who in turn played a typical part in it. *Faustus Socinus* is the first. His name brings to mind the struggles of the Reformation century, the appearance in many places of anti-trinitarian thought, and the first successful organisation of Unitarian church-life. The "Re-baptizers" in various countries laid more stress upon life than doctrine, and tended to a simple Scripturalism, inimical in the long run to the dogmatic system of the creeds. But apparently the most distinct impulse towards a Unitarian Christianity arose among the Italian Reformers. Repulsed by Catholics and Protestants alike, several, including Socinus, found a wider field in Poland and Transylvania, where great progress was made (by him especially) in organising Unitarian congregations. Under severe repression, however, the Polish churches were ultimately destroyed, and the Transylvanian suffered serious diminution. The latter survived and are now thriving.

The second period is usefully indicated by the name of *John Locke*—whom Principal Gordon has styled "the Socinus of his age." No founder of churches, no organiser of societies, not even the leader of a theological party, an independent thinker quickening the thoughts of others, his is precisely the figure to keep in our mind's eye as we consider the development of Unitarianism in this country. For generations its advent depended on the efforts, tentative and almost private, of isolated men. Starting from different points, and by no means reaching the same goals, these solitary influences resulted in a composite tendency, the true magnitude of which few appear to have realised. Anti-trinitarians were bitterly persecuted, and were the last to be burnt in this country for heresy. Nevertheless, their opinions were widely diffused in the seventeenth century, largely owing to the literature of the scattered Polish Socinians, but also in consequence of native and original study of the Bible. Arminianism led a reaction against the sterner orthodoxy, and thus opened the way for an extended heterodoxy, and a wider latitude; while a series of writers arose who pleaded on behalf of "natural religion." All this weakened the hold of the traditional dogma, and most Nonconformist bodies at that time showed signs of Unitarian thought in their midst. On the Continent, especially in Holland and Switzerland, these tendencies were equally marked. The capital proof of their seriousness and strength is furnished by the fact that the three master intellects of the age in England, John Milton, John Locke, and Isaac Newton, were distinctly anti-trinitarian. The creeds blocked the way—but what precisely did they mean? The notorious controversy concerning the Trinity which took place in the last decade of the seventeenth century showed conclusively that the orthodox doctrine could not be rationalised. All attempts by orthodox writers led to heretical views. The Unitarians of the day, supported by a notable London citizen, Thomas Firmin—a disciple of John Bidle, the first Unitarian preacher



in London—issued a series of “Tracts,” acutely exposing the contradictions of the orthodox champions. Had not “authority” interposed, the minds of men were evidently ready for a great change—such as that in regard to demoniacal agency by witchcraft (see Lecky’s account). Locke’s plea for a “Reasonable Christianity” was for the time frustrated; yet the effect of his writings was widespread. “Arianism” was diffused in the Church of England first, and then in Dissent, under the description of a “Scriptural Trinity”; and the eighteenth century witnessed the development at last of a definitely “humanitarian” Unitarianism, chiefly under the lead of *Joseph Priestley*, who might be called the “Third Socinus.”

The “English Presbyterians” mostly supplied the ranks of these pronounced Unitarians in this country. In the American States there had been an independent development in the same direction among the original Congregational churches, and these formed the core of the organised Unitarianism that had existed there for over a century. The views of Unitarians have been greatly influenced by the new science, criticism, and humanitarian ideals of the nineteenth century. The names of Channing, Parker, Emerson and Martineau sufficiently indicate the great developments that have taken place in Unitarian thought. The devotional and philosophical literature, the copious and elevated hymnology, the practical philanthropy and public service rendered by Unitarians prove that their movement is no mere vagary of religious life. In other countries, France, Switzerland, Holland, and Germany especially, there is great similarity in the general attitude of many Protestants who have not definitely organised under the Unitarian name; even among nominal Catholics, it is said, in many cases the old dogmas are no longer held, and where religion survives at all in these cases it is usually of the Unitarian type—insisting on the rights of reason, recognising few essentials, emphasising uprightness and Christ-like benevolence, and reverently trusting in the unbought benevolence divine.

The growth of organised Unitarianism is slow, yet there is growth. A large body of Quakers, and a still larger body of Universalists, are substantially at one with it. Will this movement lead to a Catholic Christianity free from dogmatic compulsion, and allied, not to imperialism (as the old Catholicism was), but to an enlightened democracy? Does it possess sufficient of the poetic and emotional material? What is its attitude, as a “Christian” type, in regard to liberal Judaism, Mohammedanism, and the Asiatic forms of theism? Such are the questions which have now to be considered. The signs of the times, the breaking down of “confessional” standards, the “new orthodoxies,” the constantly increasing liberalism of all the churches—at least in the Protestant world—show that the possibilities of the Unitarian Movement are enormous, if it is wise enough to be lowly and diligent, and still receptive to the great inspirations of the age.

At the close of the lecture Professor Bonet-Maury, who was very cordially received, spoke a few words, and a hearty vote of thanks was passed to Mr. Tarrant by acclamation.

## THE BRITISH AND FOREIGN UNITARIAN ASSOCIATION.

### THE SERVICE.

A good congregation assembled in Essex Church, Kensington, on Wednesday morning, though in some places there were gaps in the pews.

Probably the tension of feeling in London, which makes all thoughts centre round the solemn funeral pageant, may be partly accountable for this. But the idea recurs that the evening would be a much better time for a large united service, and if this involved some re-arrangement of the programme, a great act of united worship might well be taken as the central event of the week round which all the other meetings grouped themselves in due subordination.

The service was conducted by the Rev. J. J. Wright, who in his sermon wisely abandoned more abstract themes for a plain appeal on behalf of the needs and opportunities of the Sunday-school, a branch of church work on which he speaks with the authority of a rich experience. We print the sermon in full elsewhere, and we hope that its facts and figures, its pleading for a more fruitful use of a fine opportunity, and its vision of the Sunday-school of the future, will receive the attention they deserve. On some of these matters Mr. Wright will contribute shortly a series of special articles to our columns.

At the close of the service the Dead March was played in respectful homage to the memory of the late King.

### THE LUNCHEON.

After the service, the President entertained a number of guests as usual to luncheon, at the Holborn Restaurant.

Before the toast list was proceeded with, the company stood in reverent silence as a tribute to the late King. The President then gave the health of King George V., expressing the earnest hope of all present for the prosperity of his reign.

The toast “Our guests from other lands” was cordially received. Professor Bonet-Maury, of Paris, in returning thanks, spoke of the sense of gratitude and solidarity which bound the liberal Protestants of France to the Unitarians of England. He brought a message of greeting from the United Reformed Church in France, in the name of their common cause, which he defined as pure religion and perfect liberty of conscience. In their national union of liberal churches there were 120 congregations and 115 ministers grouped into 5 regions or districts. What they needed for the success of their work was not money but men. There was a difficulty in recruiting men for the ministry.

The Rev. F. C. Fleischer, the representative of the Protestantbond of Holland, also replied. In the spiritual world, he said, there were no nationalities, for all were children of the one Father. He emphasised the fact that the number of people who had affinities with Unitarianism was much larger than that of avowed adherents. “We foreigners,” he concluded, amid laughter, “are not called Unitarians, we might not like to be called Unitarians; but we feel as Unitarians.”

The President, in proposing “Freedom

and Progress in Religion,” referred in very cordial terms to the presence of the Rev. R. J. Campbell, of the City Temple, as one of their guests. They regarded him as one of the foremost champions of freedom and progress in religion. As such they respected and honoured him, and hoped that his efforts might prosper.

The Rev. R. J. Campbell was very cordially received on rising to reply. It is an honour, he said, to respond to this toast, especially in this assembly. His recent disavowal of the Unitarian position “as ordinarily understood” meant that they were trying to stand for something larger than any sectarian movement. The need was for young men. We live in spacious times. There is no slackening of the pace. The civilisation which was cradled in Christianity is not exhausted. We are witnessing the dawning of a world civilisation, and this is an entirely new thing. It will have to address itself to other problems than those of taking in unexplored territories, and making new beginnings. In the growth of this civilisation, what is happening to religion? Is it true that our civilisation is resulting in the death of Christianity? We are witnessing on the material plane a portent of what is about to happen on the spiritual plane. While religions are many, religion is one. It has multitudinous expressions, it is in essence always the same. We are working towards a world religion. The spiritual unity of mankind as a fact of our common consciousness is almost in sight, if only we have faith to work for it with all our might.

The Rev. Dr. Drummond, of Oxford, also responded, and said that, like Dr. Channing, he was always young for freedom. Unitarians have always refused to define Unitarianism. They are willing not only to be free themselves, but also to be inclusive of others, as they were willing to be included, without any restriction of creed or name. Turning to the idea of progress, he pointed out that progress in religion meant the growth and deepening of the consciousness of God within the soul. There is a growing feeling for something deeper and larger and more heavenly in the life of men. It is still unformed. There must be varieties of impression and friendly collisions of thought. The time is not yet. But the time is to come when all these will be fused into one all-conquering spiritual religion. All our differences are more or less superficial, the struggling waves on the great ocean of thought. It is for us to advance this great cause in the world, and it must be remembered that it transcends quite infinitely all attempts to bring men over to our own view of divine truth.

The other toasts were “The Conference, and kindred Societies,” responded to by the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson. “Our New Ministers,” responded to by the Rev. Bertram Lister, and finally the health of the ever popular president, and most genial host, Mr. John Harrison, which was proposed by the Rev. C. Roper, and pledged with enthusiasm by the whole company.

\* \* We are obliged to hold over our report of the Theodore Parker Centenary Meeting on Wednesday evening, and the annual Business Meeting of the Association on Thursday morning, till next week.



## CORRESPONDENCE.

[The Editor is not responsible for the opinions expressed by correspondents. LETTERS CANNOT BE INSERTED WITHOUT THE WRITER'S NAME, and all private information should be accompanied by the name and address of the senders.]

## HOSPITAL SUNDAY IN LONDON.

SIR,—Now that Hospital Sunday in London is drawing near, I should like to suggest to the readers of *THE INQUIRER*, and especially to ministers and chapel committees, that they should take care to send their contributions to those hospitals only which do not support or encourage vivisection.

At some hospitals an inquiry on this subject is put off with the answer, "Oh, no, the hospital has nothing to do with it; it is the medical school," which, as the hospital and the medical school have the same doctors and the same students, seems to me a paltry quibble.

Among the hospitals which I have reason to believe give no countenance to vivisection, I may mention the Temperance Hospital, the Homœopathic, and the Women's Hospital in Euston-road; but above all the Anti-Vivisection Hospital at Battersea. This last is founded on the anti-vivisection principle, and has on that account repeatedly been refused a share of the Hospital Sunday Fund; and when at last a grant was offered, it was under conditions which could not have been accepted without a sacrifice of principle. I think, therefore, that all opponents of vivisection should take care that this hospital should get a due share of the public beneficence.—Yours, &c.,

M. C. MARTINEAU.

1, Clifton-place, Sussex-square, W.,

May 15, 1910.

[We print Miss Martineau's letter in order that she may bring her plea before the public, but we are unwilling ourselves to encourage any course of isolated action which would involve breaking away from a common civic movement.—ED. of INQ.]

## FOR THE CHILDREN.

## NESTS IN MAY.

May is the month, not of flowers only, but of nests. Everywhere the birds are busy. In the smoky town the sparrow is sitting in a nest of dirty straw tucked into some grimy corner; but her eggs are clean, and her heart is gay, although this is the second, or maybe the third clutch she has laid this year.

In the country—in the sweet, clean country—every wood, every field, every lane has its bird-built homes. There sweet music is poured from millions of feathered throats; millions of feathered breasts rest—oh so lightly!—on dainty eggs; millions of little gaping bills receive tiny morsels brought by happy, swift-winged parents.

I hold that the joy which bird-life adds to the world is one of God's best gifts. Every boy, every girl, should have some conscious enjoyment of this gift. I do not mean by keeping a feathered prisoner in even a well-tended cage; but by watching, and

loving, and listening to the happy, free wild birds.

Every year that you study birds and their nests your pleasure will grow greater; but if you want to have the keenest joy of all, you will not merely try how many nests you can see and identify, but you will try to watch one or two daily from the earliest building stage until the young are ready to fly. This is seldom possible unless you have a good deal of free time. It cannot be done in a hurry, for the birds must not be startled, and you must not be seen by ordinary people, or they may discover your treasure and rob the nest.

Last May I was cycling on a coach road in the Lake district, when a pied wagtail flew past with a dry leaf in her bill. I dismounted, and watched, but kept at a distance of many yards, for wagtails are very wary birds, and seldom betray their nests. I hardly dared breathe after I had stooped and hidden myself, as far as might be, behind my bicycle.

The bird had alighted on an unmortared stone wall. It was some time before she was convinced that I was a harmless object. At last she went into a large hole in the wall, and soon came out without her leaf. When she had flown out of sight, I examined the hole, and found three dry leaves laid together. The next step was to mark the spot, or rather to place one or two stones so as to mark a spot very near it. If you put any mark exactly over a nest you may attract attention to it. This is what you desire to avoid. It is often wise to put your mark on the opposite side of the road.

I hung about the place for half an hour, during which the bird returned three times with building stuff. I visited that nest every day, and often twice a day, till the young were nearly ready to fly. Then I had to leave home, and a friend took up the watch, and twenty-four hours later found the little family running about in the wall. During the weeks that I watched that nest I learned more interesting facts about wagtail life than I have space to tell you of. I can give you a few, however. No other small bird was allowed to settle within forty feet of the nest. A chaffinch seemed very anxious to build near, but was chased away by Mrs. Wagtail. When the nest was half finished, I came early one morning to find that the bird had worked a large lump of clean white cotton wool into the nest. This white spot was most conspicuous; I therefore placed a stone where it would partly block the hole, and, at least, hide the cotton wool. I was a little anxious lest this blocking should scare the hen, but next time she came she went in as if nothing had happened. The cock never once showed himself to me until there were young birds to feed. The hen often made twittering noises while she was building, but after the first egg was laid I did not hear a sound from her. It seemed that she was willing to risk the discovery of her nest, but that eggs were too precious!

The nest was finished in five days, and for three more days the hen was never to be seen. On the fourth day after completion a pretty grey speckled egg was laid. Each succeeding day one was added. When six had been laid the hen began to sit. She had now become used to me, and would let me stand so close to her

that I could easily have stroked her; but if I raised my hand, or made any but the slowest and gentlest movement, she flew off in alarm.

I have watched and touched dozens of nests, but have only once known the eggs or birds to be deserted in consequence. This was in the case of a blackbird which I found on four eggs. When she flew off I followed her closely, as I wished to examine her plumage. She did her best to conceal herself. Three weeks later I found those eggs stone-cold. I am now careful not to follow sitting hens.

The weather became very fine and warm. The road was filled with traffic for a couple of hours each morning and evening as people drove, cycled, and walked towards the distant mountain pass and home again. I trembled for my bird's treasure, but she was cunning. She found that she could get in and out of the wall from the field side as well as from the road, and when any one was near she went and came by the field. But for this her nest would have shared the sad fate of many which I found robbed on that green highway.

In just under a fortnight after the hen began to sit the first egg hatched out. Next day the nest was crammed with orange-mouthed babies. Then it was a pleasure to come daily to see how the family prospered. To find all safe was a daily joy, for the weather was lovely, and the road more and more frequented.

I was truly sorry to have to leave home before the birds could fly. Wagtails usually return to their old nesting places.

I am now in London, but when I go home, as I hope to do in a few days, I shall hasten to that hole, and shall perhaps be able to tell you what I find.

EMILY NEWLING.

THE death is announced of Dr. Emil Schürer, Professor of New Testament Exegesis at the University of Göttingen. Dr. Schürer was one of the small group of German theologians whose work is well known in our own country. His "History of the Jewish People in the Time of Jesus Christ" has long been a standard authority, though some of its positions may need modification in the light of more recent study.

MR. EDMUND G. GARDNER, M.A., has been appointed to deliver the remaining Barlow Lectures on Dante during the present term at University College in succession to the late Professor A. J. Butler. Mr. Gardner's lectures will begin on Monday, the 23rd inst., at three o'clock, and will be on the subject of "The Divina Commedia in Relation with Mysticism and some of its Mediæval Sources." The Barlow Dante Lectures are open to the public without fee or ticket.

MESSRS. LONGMANS announce "The State and the Doctor," by Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb. This will form another volume in the series written by the authors in support of the Minority Report of the Poor Law Commission.



## MEMORIAL NOTICE.

THE REV. T. R. SKEMP.

AFTER a prolonged illness, borne with exemplary patience, the Rev. T. R. Skemp, minister of the Church of the Saviour, Southampton, passed into the higher life on the 10th inst.

Mr. Skemp was the son of a Baptist minister, and all the associations of his early life were closely bound up with evangelical Nonconformity. Destined for a business career, he entered the office connected with the works of John Bright Bros., in Rochdale, while still a boy. At a later period he was head of a business in Manchester. Always a man with strong literary inclinations, for many years he wrote regularly for the *Co-operative News* and other periodicals. A three-volume novel, and a host of stories, long and short, as well as articles on various subjects, proceeded from his pen. Meanwhile, almost unconsciously, a process of growth was taking place in his mind. No sudden change occurred in his theological convictions, but gradually passing from the orthodoxy in which he was bred, yet always retaining his hold on the essentials of faith, he at length found himself to be a convinced Unitarian. When his theological position became clear, there sprang up in his mind the desire to take up the work of the ministry, and thus to share the joy and blessing of his maturely adopted views with his fellow-men. A change of ecclesiastical connections always involves considerable trials of feeling, and, possibly, severance from former friends. Mr. Skemp faced such contingencies with characteristic courage; and the personal esteem in which he was held by those who knew him intimately saved him from much of the pain of broken ties from which others in his position have suffered.

His first ministerial charge was at Douglas, I.O.M. Here circumstances arose which made no small call upon his determination and sense of duty. But he was not a man who ran away from difficulties, and he did what needed to be done with firmness and discretion. Unfortunately, ill-health and physical disability had for some time made exertions of all kinds more burdensome; but the "thorn in the flesh" was not allowed to withhold him from efforts within his powers. After six years' service in Douglas, Mr. Skemp took charge of the missions at Ramsgate and Margate. The joint ministry at these places was terminated by a serious illness. In the hope of regaining strength Mr. Skemp undertook a voyage to the Antipodes, and while in Australia was invited to take temporary charge of the Unitarian Church in Sydney, N.S.W. Here he remained for more than a year, returning to England with the goodwill of a people who would fain have retained him as their permanent religious teacher and friend. He settled in Southampton four years ago, and though life was a constant struggle with bodily infirmities, here some of his best ministerial work was done. Labouring even beyond his strength, aided by a devoted wife and by the cheerfully-rendered help of members of his family, he had the satisfaction of seeing his congregation make steady, if not rapid, progress. He was warmly concerned for the welfare of the young, and one of the happiest days of his life was a Sunday in last December when, at a special service, eight young people were formally admitted to the fellowship of the church.

The funeral took place on the 13th inst., when the Rev. J. C. Hirst, who officiated at his marriage and gave the charge to the minister at Mr. Skemp's ordination, conducted the service. In addition to relations, a number of neighbouring ministers and many members of the congregation of the Church of the Saviour attended to show respect to a good man's memory.

## THE FUTURE OF LIBERAL CHRISTIAN EFFORT IN THIS COUNTRY.\*

BY THE REV. R. J. CAMPBELL, M.A.

DELIVERED IN THE CITY TEMPLE LAST SUNDAY EVENING.

DURING the next few days the spring assembly meetings of the organisation hitherto known as the Progressive League, but which, I hope, will be known in future by a more specifically religious title, will be held on the premises of the King's Weigh House Church. In the ordinary course these meetings should have been held in the provinces—Brighton being the resort chosen on this occasion—but the alteration has been kindly made by the executive to meet my convenience, my medical adviser having insisted that I should not be required to travel and speak at present. Tomorrow the business session of the assembly will take place in the afternoon, and it is expected that this meeting should open with something in the nature of a presidential address. But as what I have to say concerns a larger public than the League as it exists at present, and as most of our delegates are here in the City Temple now, I have thought it better to devote the time at my disposal this evening to a statement of what I conceive to be the mission of Liberal Christianity in this country at the present time, especially as represented by this church, the League, and kindred organisations.

The League has now been in existence about two years. Its "first general assembly" was held in this church a year and a half ago. Our organisation was completed and our constitution passed at the Oxford meetings twelve months ago. We have, therefore, some little experience to go upon and a brief record of work to our credit, and should now be in a position to profit by the

## LESSONS WE HAVE LEARNED,

and steer our future course accordingly. I ought to say with absolute frankness that I have learned some myself which I intend to put to the test.

Let us in the first place acknowledge with thankfulness that there are ways in which God has prospered us beyond our expectations. Not counting the amounts raised by our various branches for their own local work, and not counting what has been raised and expended for League work in the City Temple itself, our balance-sheet shows that there has passed through our hands at our headquarters in the King's Weigh House a sum of no less than £1,200 during the past six months. This is more than double the amount we have ever raised for general League purposes in any previous six months, and great credit is due to our general secretary and his helpers for the result thus attained. It is a bad plan to estimate spiritual success by money, but when it is remembered that our society is as yet in its infancy, and that up till last October it was mainly dependent upon one or two individuals for its financial resources, we are fairly entitled to say that this increase in revenue must represent a corresponding increase in life and power. None of these contributions, taken singly, represents a larger sum than £50; in the main they consist of small gifts freely and spontaneously given by those who have been made acquainted with

the work that is actually being done by the organisation. For the most part it has been given on account of

## OUR SOCIAL SERVICE

which, I need not hesitate to say, is, in the opinion of experts who have a right to speak, among the best and most efficient that is being done under religious auspices to-day. Our schemes of work have been taken from the recommendations of the Minority and Majority Reports of the Poor-law Commission, and have therefore been drafted with a view to avoiding what the experience of such veteran social workers as Canon Barnett has proved to be the mistakes of much of the social service of the immediate past. Our League study circles have also made a good beginning under the directorship of my colleague, the Rev. E. W. Lewis, who is laying his plans for an extension of operations in the autumn.

But I should mislead you if I were to allow you to imagine that I am entirely satisfied with these results. I am not. They are good as far as they go, but the League will have to do much more if it is to fulfil the purpose for which it was started. Again and again that purpose has been reiterated—Liberal Christianity a spiritual movement. My main object in dealing with the subject this evening is to re-emphasise this. I wish to let as large a public as possible know exactly what we are aiming at, in the hope of securing increased sympathy and support. This, too, is why I shall recommend to the Assembly to-morrow the desirability of

## CHANGING THE NAME OF THE LEAGUE.

Our full title, the League of Progressive Thought and Social Service, is quite clear and good; no one could misunderstand or take objection to it. But our shorter and more popular title, and the one by which we are generally known, the Progressive League, has exposed us to misinterpretations of our aims and objects which have done us some amount of harm. There is nothing wrong with the word "progressive" in itself, and it is acquiring a very considerable religious use; but it is associated with so many movements of a purely secular character that it is little to be wondered at that many people who only know us under that name should misconstrue our motives and intentions. In and around London, for example, the word "progressive" has a special application to municipal politics, and, strange though it may seem, during the recent London County Council election our League was very frequently confounded in the popular mind, so far as it knew of our existence, with the caucus of the Progressive party in that contest. Then, too, persons of no very pronounced religious sympathies have joined themselves to us on the ground that our name is broad enough to admit them. I think these persons are in their wrong place. I should be the last man in the world to impose a religious test on anyone, but I do not feel that a professedly Christian movement is quite the place for individuals who are out of sympathy with Christianity. If our name exposes us to this danger, then the sooner we change it the better. The more strongly we can press our Liberal Christian faith upon the attention of the masses, the sooner we shall gain our end.

For

## WHAT IS LIBERAL CHRISTIANITY

as we understand it? In his much-controverted article in the *Hibbert Journal* some months ago, "The Collapse of Liberal Christianity," our friend Dr. Anderson, of Dundee, was certainly not referring to the Liberal Christianity represented by this church or by his own. He has since explicitly said so in the *Christian Commonwealth*. There is, he declares, a Liberal Christianity which has

\* By permission of Mr. Campbell, and indeed at his special request, we give a full report of his very significant address. It raises many questions and kindles many hopes for all who are deeply concerned, as we claim to be, for the growth and progress of Liberal Christianity. We must, however, owing to the pressure on our space this week, reserve our comments for a future occasion.—Ed. of Inq.



not collapsed, in fact a Christianity whose greatest triumphs have yet to come, and it is that for which we stand. The religious liberalism whose day he believes to be over is that which acknowledges the human master, but not the divine Christ. Now I agree with Dr. Anderson, and with all who hold by him, that that which specially differentiates our movement from what has usually been called Liberal Christianity is this mystic note, this devotion to the divine Christ, the Christ who saves. It is this which will give us our power in the world if we are only wise enough to see it and brave enough to stand by it. We want the note of worship, of adoration of the eternal Christ, of evangelic fervour, to be the note of our movement. Hitherto Liberal Christianity has never been a spiritual movement unless we count such organisations as the German mystics of the fourteenth century, called the Friends of God, and the Society of Friends which still exists in our midst, as examples of it. They may fairly be called such, for they have never attributed importance to dogma, and have consistently and unswervingly witnessed for the mystic principle of

#### THE INWARD LIGHT.

We inherit this tradition. I have no interest in rationalistic religion as such; in any protest against ecclesiastical formulas that I have ever made I have been moved simply and solely by the desire to enable men to realise more easily the immediacy of God without the hindrances imposed by dogmas which are revolting both to the intellect and the moral sense. But let it be clearly understood that our movement is not primarily theological; it is spiritual. One of the strangest misconceptions connected with my work is that people who know little of it should think of it as consisting in the denial of certain familiar theological propositions and the assertion of others in their place. As a matter of fact, it has comparatively little to do with theology; its theological implications are only incidental to its main object, which is to simplify as far as possible our modes of approach to God and our understanding of His ways. It is an attempt to show that spiritual life is not dependent upon, and never has been dependent upon, the body of obsolete beliefs commonly supposed to be Christianity, and from which the modern mind has so violently recoiled. But this done we have nothing more to do with negations; all our interest is centred upon Christ and the soul, the soul and Christ. All that the saints of past ages have ever felt concerning their relationship to the Christ eternal, who is God made manifest in man, we feel now or are seeking to feel; all their confidence in his redeeming work is ours, too, but we view it as a spiritual process which has not yet reached its consummation, a process whereby Atonement is being made for the whole human race in relation to God. This is very far from being the Liberal Christianity which contents itself with humanising Jesus and stops there. We attribute far more importance to making divinity real, to preaching the gospel of salvation, the making-one of God and man. It is the gospel of the Christ who is still being crucified in man for man, and rising triumphant by the cross to the eternal throne.

Can this gospel become

#### A SPIRITUAL MOVEMENT?

Some say it cannot. Well, we shall see. There are those who declare that it is discredited already, that it cannot produce the fruits of life and character which have always been associated with the evangel of Jesus in the past, and particularly with all great Christian awakenings. I might feel misgivings about it but for one thing—the City Temple. The results I desire to see in every corner of Christendom are here now, and if they can be

produced here they can be produced in every branch of the League. I have often felt that I should like to tell the people of this church how greatly they have encouraged and strengthened their minister's heart amid innumerable difficulties. The world at large does not understand the work I am trying to do. It is saddening to hear prominent speakers talk about it, or to read what the religious newspapers say of it, even when they think they are speaking kindly; they are utterly blind. They seem to think that there is some little kink or peculiarity in one's way of putting things which will be outgrown by-and-by, perhaps, or at least may do no great harm if the churches do not make too much fuss about it. It never seems to occur to them that there may be something deep and real in it, some working of the Spirit of God, which will have to be reckoned with more and more as the days go by. When they cease to be abusive they become patronising. Under such circumstances, I say, it is conceivable that one might have misgivings as to whether this simpler evangel could produce the intense and beautiful spiritual experience of the Christianity of the past, Catholic and Protestant, were it not for the City Temple. Here it is; I see it; I cannot doubt it. Here is a praying people, a loving people, a people so moved by the Christ spirit that they rejoice exceedingly in fellowship and service. It is a spirit which has broken bounds and is sending our workers far afield in their desire to do what they can to bring their fellow-men to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus. What is possible here is possible elsewhere; in fact it is to be seen elsewhere; there are other liberal churches where the same fruit of the Spirit is to be found in abundance. Cannot we draw closer together and help one another more? And cannot every individual member of our League become a missionary of this gospel and a minister of this blessed experience? I am sure he can. Now is our opportunity. We have something far better to do than to meet together as debating societies from week to week. We have to live and work, and witness for the only gospel that has any lifting power in it for the social and individual life of to-day.

And this brings me to another point which must be stated with equal clearness. The past year has taught that I cannot be of any use in

#### POLITICS.

I still remain a member of the political party which appears to me to have more moral force in it than any other, but I cannot help it much on the platform. My strength is sharply limited. I have been ill almost ever since our last October meetings, and have come to the conclusion that the best service I can render to the community is to concentrate upon my pulpit work. It was for this reason that I declined all overtures to become a parliamentary candidate. "This one thing I do." The League must do the same. Our constitution provides that we take no part in party politics, but many of our members have shown more interest in those aspects of our work which touch upon political issues than those which are most purely religious. Let me beg of you to reverse this attitude. I am quite sure that we have a great opportunity before us if we can only help to quicken the spiritual consciousness of our time and trust it to bring about a fuller recognition of the obligations of human brotherhood. I am sure that this is so. Every spiritual awakening that the world has yet witnessed has resulted in this in some form or other. The thirteenth century was perhaps the period when ecclesiastical pretensions reached their greatest height—a period when popes deposed monarchs and bishops were territorial princes of vast wealth and power. Then came the

Franciscan revival with its contempt for riches and its simple message of hope and comfort for the poor. Wycliffe's "Poor Preachers" did a similar work in this country a hundred years later, for, as you know, Lollardism as a religious movement soon became identified with enthusiasm for a simpler social life, and a drawing together of all ranks and classes; when in the end it was put down with fire and sword it was not so much because of its heresy in doctrine as because of the danger it threatened to material power and privilege. And what has the Salvation Army done in our time? It began as an orthodox gospel of salvation by faith; it has developed into one of salvation by works. It still holds to its crude, terrible creed, but that is not what is gaining a hearing for it to-day; the secret of its power is that it identifies religion with social redemption. We may or may not approve its methods of working towards the latter; the fact remains that its spiritual enthusiasm has become a social solvent—a mighty force drawing the extremes of society together. These facts of religious history make

#### OUR MISSION

plain. I am firmly convinced that it will be vain to attempt to achieve our object the other way about. There is as much hard and cruel materialism among some of the more advanced social reformers to-day as there is among the plutocrats they hate. When I listen to some of the speeches made at times by some who call themselves the spokesmen of the dispossessed, and when I note their bitter class spirit, I cannot but feel deeply disappointed and sad at heart. It is not this which is going to bring in the kingdom of heaven. We want a gospel which shall appeal equally to both ends of the social scale, a gospel which will make the rich man want to do away with all the artificial barriers that separate him from his brothers who earn their living by the sweat of their brow, and a gospel which will enable the poor man to see that material good is worth nothing in itself, but only as it helps to release the higher energies of the soul. I believe the liberal Christian gospel can do this, and I believe no other can; no other will be listened to by the average man of to-day outside the life of the churches. I think I may humbly claim to have proved this. Many individuals find their way to the City Temple on Sundays and Thursdays, and keep in touch with our work all over the country, who had previously been entirely out of touch with organised Christianity.

Let me tell you then in closing what I strongly urge should be our special work in

#### THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE.

Only twenty per cent., or less, of the population of this country is associated with church life. All the denominations put together can only claim twenty per cent. of the nation. What about the remaining eighty per cent? Is this without religious susceptibilities? By no means; it would be ridiculous to say so. Yet what is being done to make religion intelligible and helpful to this four-fifths of the community, a four-fifths comprising all ranks of society? We have many evangelising agencies at work, but none—I think it may be fairly said—which on anything like a large scale presents a liberal Christian gospel. What is wanted is an organisation which shall stand to all liberal churches somewhat in the relation occupied by the Church Army to the Established Church, and by the Salvation Army to all evangelical communions established and unestablished. I greatly admire the Church Army for the work it is doing on its own lines with the moral and material support of the Church of England behind it. Has not the time come for liberal Christianity to make a similar effort, and is not the League



the organisation to do it? At any rate we mean to try. I appeal to-night, in so far as my voice can reach the other liberal Christian churches besides that in which we meet, for the backing and sympathy that we need. Up to now the City Temple has been almost alone among strong and well-established religious societies in giving us this support. It is no exaggeration to say, as our secretary informs me, that nine-tenths of the funds required for our work up to the present have, directly or indirectly, come out of this church. Will not others help us? Many clergymen of the Church of England are in sympathy with us; so are thousands of Free Church ministers. What we ask now is that they will bring their churches into line with our movement, so far at least as to furnish us with a standing ground from which to sally forth upon the unchurched masses in every locality. Let it be understood that we do not wish to split churches—the very opposite, in fact. We urge our members to remain in association with churches wherever they possibly can. I claim that if the Christian Endeavour Society can find a home in churches to which its methods appeal, and is considered part of the church work, the same might be true of the League. And if Pleasant Sunday Afternoon meetings and such like are considered a useful addition to ordinary church life, cannot League meetings have a similar opportunity? At present most of our branches find themselves hard put to it to obtain suitable meeting places, and their weekly meeting is held on some day other than Sunday. I suggest that this might be altered. Liberal churches might affiliate with us, and either start a branch of the League as part of their ordinary work, or, what perhaps would do as well in most cases, take up whatever portion of our League studies or social schemes would be most useful to them; in return we should gladly admit their representatives to a share in the control of our general evangelistic work among the masses. I am sure our work only needs to be known to win an enormously greater measure of support from the churches than it at present receives.

In this connection I ought to mention our

#### PIONEER PREACHERS.

Owing to my illness the scheme for the sending forth of these special evangelists has been delayed, but it is now being vigorously proceeded with. We are beginning with a small number of young unmarried men who are prepared to devote themselves to preaching without expecting more than a simple maintenance in return. A hostel has been secured for them where they will live in community under the charge of a warden, and I now make my first appeal for furniture or other contributions necessary to give us a start. I believe there are many people who would willingly give us help of this kind. We have had between thirty and forty applications up to the present from young men who are prepared to give up their worldly prospects for the sake of preaching Christ as you hear him preached every Sunday from this pulpit. We have accepted six of these applicants as a beginning. Will you help us in making our hostel into a real home for them? If you cannot give us money, perhaps you can give us chairs and tables. It is somewhat remarkable that the building we have chosen for our purpose, should the negotiations be carried through, has previously been used for a similar work, but under High Church auspices. I am informed that at the solemn valedictory service which preceded the removal of the altar from the chapel when the society vacated the premises, special prayer was offered to God that if the building were used again it might be for a spiritual work and that it should meet with divine approval and blessing. I trust that prayer will be answered. May the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ prosper the work of our hands upon us.

#### SOCIAL MEETING AT THE KING'S WEIGH HOUSE.

A SOCIAL meeting in connection with the Whitsuntide Conference of the Progressive League (which will henceforth be known as the Liberal Christian League), was held in the Binney Institute on Monday, May 16, the Rev. R. J. Campbell presiding. Short addresses were given by the Rev. E. W. Lewis, the Rev. W. H. Drummond, and the Rev. H. Youldon, and the proceedings were varied by some excellent music. The performers were Miss May Campbell, who gave several solos, and Miss Colenso, who played the 'cello. The speeches were followed with great interest by an appreciative audience, and the note of hopefulness was dominant throughout.

#### THE REV. E. W. LEWIS ON A REVIVAL OF RELIGION.

The Rev. E. W. Lewis prefaced his address with some humorous remarks directed chiefly to those who regarded the attitude of the League with the timidity and irritation born of a too close adherence to orthodoxy. Passing to the more serious aspect of their religious faith, he said that we were at the beginning of a great revival of true religion in this country, but the revival was going to be realised through existing organisations. Christianity must have its chance; it must express itself as a positive as well as a negative movement, and it was with the former that we had most concern. The churches on all hands were recording a diminution of their members, and organised Christianity was languishing; but he personally did not rejoice in this, for he revered the historic fabric even though he no longer walked in the old way. But, he asked, could the dying be restored, and the exhausted revived; and, if so, what could we do individually to bring this about? This was a subject which was to be dealt with later on by his friend the Rev. W. H. Drummond, who was giving such valuable service to the cause of liberal Christianity. He himself felt that if civilisation and social betterment were all we stood for, and if these activities were not somehow related to a higher order, we were not building a permanent temple, and all was desolation and vanity. The moral life alone did not satisfy, and stir all the deepest emotions of the soul. It was only a means to an end, and he believed that the pain and discipline and manifold effort of the moral life led to the liberation of a higher type of consciousness altogether, the religious, the cosmic consciousness. But neither in this nor in any other concern could we live to ourselves, and the liberal Christian movement must have results in a communal sense.

#### THE REV. W. H. DRUMMOND ON THE HISTORIC CHURCH.

The Rev. W. H. Drummond said that it had been a little difficult to choose a subject to speak on after the strenuous day of business which they had gone through, and in deciding to address them on "The Historic Church," he had no intention of plunging them into a dry, theological discussion. The historic church stood for something that was very dear to men and women, and although some wished to maintain it in the old exclusive spirit, while others felt reluctantly obliged to abandon it altogether, he believed that it was possible for men to have a conception of it, which would do away with exclusiveness on the one hand, and prevent severance on the other. What did we mean by Christianity? Not merely an assent to a specific creed or set of dogmas. There was an immense diversity of thought and experience, for instance, among those who were gathered together that evening. Some might be more

mystic, and some more rationalistic in their view of truth, but there was something equally precious to them all pulsing in their hearts. He would not try to define it, because even the simplest things often lost their savour and beauty when an attempt was made to set them forth in logical terms. But it resulted from that outpouring of new life which the literature of the New Testament was an attempt to explain, the life of Jesus Christ. It was this sense of a new life which held men together. They felt that it was not a thing which they had chosen, but which had come from on high, and claimed them for its own. It went forth into the world through other human lives, and the result had been the founding of the great religious organisations as an expression of life. Coming to our own day, with its changed outlook and intellectual conceptions, we still belonged to the same living fellowship, and men could never succeed in excluding it from their thoughts and lives. No ecclesiastical anathemas had ever cut off one single soul from the living Church of Christ. We must all see the value of incorporation with this great and vital tradition. It was very much the same as our national life, which was part of our inheritance, and which was pulsing in every one of us irrespective of diversity of opinion and character. Christianity in the same way was an organic life which grew and adapted itself to the changing thought of our time, and to which all sorts and conditions of men contributed. It was greater than all the dogmas in which men sought to express it, and as soon as a man became a big enough Christian he ceased to have a label, and belonged to us all. Why should we therefore maim ourselves, and go out of this historic church as isolated individuals, when we might be incorporated in its living fellowship? He would like to urge upon his hearers that in their own particular churches, and in their secret thoughts, they should try to be loyal to that great conception, and to remember that this meant that the life must so live in them that they, in their turn, might hand it on enriched and deepened to the generations yet to come. There was no contradiction between our spiritual loyalty and our social efforts; indeed, we could not have spiritual loyalty without social energy, and the latter would not be productive unless we had in us a life greater than our own. The previous evening he was passing along the Old Kent-road, and as he walked the one thought which seemed to keep time with his footsteps was, "What is liberal Christianity going to do for the Old Kent-road on a Sunday night?" There was the great problem, and we must approach it by means of patient study of the special needs of our own time, and by throwing ourselves with all the abandonment of love into the work of carrying the message to the masses of the people. We might all make our own that prayer of Tennyson's which he wrote in one of his deepest moods:—

And let not Reason fail me, nor the sod  
Draw from my death Thy living flower and  
grass,

Before I learn that Love, which is and was  
My Father, and my Brother, and my God!

The Rev. H. Youldon, of Liverpool, followed with a stirring speech, in the course of which he said that the one fact which stood out most prominently in regard to the League was its healthiness. They had given up that view of Christianity which regarded it merely as a form of consolation for those who were sorely afflicted in mind or body, and they were now finding in it a vital force which would bring back vigour and manhood to the race. They wanted men to come to Christ with frank faces, open hearts, and great ideals, with more concern to measure what they might do in service than what they might perchance gain in consolation.



## LONDON GUILDS' UNION.

THE seventh annual meeting of the Union was held at Mansford-street, Bethnal Green, on Wednesday evening, May 11.

Proceedings opened with a short service conducted by the Rev. Gordon Cooper, the retiring president. After the service Mr. Cooper apologised for the meeting being held so late in the year, it having been found impossible to fix a date earlier which was convenient to all the Guilds. The reports of the Committee and Treasurer were then read.

The Committee's report stated that the Union gave opportunities for the members of the various Guilds to get into touch with one another for the interchange of thought, for encouragement, and for the comparison of work in the various Guilds, but above this it fostered a spirit of unity, a feeling that others have similar aims and objects and similar difficulties.

An account of the meetings held during the year followed. The spring meeting had been held at Highgate in April of 1909, when, after a service conducted by the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth, an address was given by the Rev. J. Arthur Pearson on his "Impressions of London."

The outing took place at Kew in July at the invitation of the Essex Church Guild.

The autumn meeting was held at Stamford-street, Blackfriars, the opening service being conducted by the Rev. J. C. Ballantyne, followed by an address by the Rev. Frank K. Freeston on "A New Order of Chivalry," which appeared in full in the January *Sunday-school Quarterly*.

The following Guilds now constitute the Union:—Bermondsey, Blackfriars, Essex Church, Highgate, Mansford-street, Stratford, and Walthamstow.

Following the report, statements were made by representatives of the various Guilds present giving accounts of their work during the past year.

Mr. Cooper, in moving the adoption of the reports, said that the interchange of speakers was not made enough of. Often papers were carefully prepared to be read but once, and then laid aside, when they might have been used again elsewhere with advantage.

The Rev. John Ellis, in seconding, said that he was pleased to hear that in one of the Guilds several members took part in each meeting, thus giving opportunities for them to give expression to their deepest feelings; at a Guild with which he had been connected several preachers had been made in this way.

The Rev. A. A. Charlesworth supported the motion. He found from the statements of the Guilds' representatives that the work was being taken seriously, and that the members were trying to realise the fellowship of true comradeship.

After the adoption of the reports the following were elected as officers for the ensuing year:—President, the Rev. A. A. Charlesworth; vice-president, the Rev. Gordon Cooper; treasurer, Mr. Herbert Gimson; secretary, Mr. F. E. Allen.

There were 47 present, representing Blackfriars, Essex Church, Highgate, Mansford-street, and Stratford.

## WESTERN UNION CONFERENCE AT SIDMOUTH.

THE sixty-fourth annual conference meeting and sermon of the Western Union of Unitarian and Free Christian Churches was held on May 12, at Sidmouth, after an interval of three years. Owing to alterations which are being effected in the Old Meeting House, the service and conference were held in the schoolroom. In spite of the unfavourable weather in the morning, there was a good attendance of delegates and visitors.

Divine service was held at noon, and was conducted by the Rev. C. E. Pike (Bridgwater), there being a full congregation. The Rev. A. N. Blatchford, of Bristol, in the course of his sermon on the Ideal Church, said in the search for such a church they would hope to discover a church resting on stable principles that would support an enduring religious faith, and a healthy, energetic, religious, and philanthropic life. Whatever church had to claim their heart-whole allegiance in the future must be a church the first principle of whose life was freedom—absolute, unlimited, the very uttermost. That, he ventured to think, speaking for himself, was the breath of life for them.

The Rev. W. Agar (Sidmouth) occupied the chair at the lunch at the Manor Hall, and referred to the death of King Edward, the first toast being honoured in silence. The chairman then gave "Religious and Civil Liberty all the world over." He said they had won that liberty at a great price. They must now prepare to make any sacrifice to maintain it. It was by no means complete, and what remained for them to do was for every man to go on, and not stop until they had reached the goal of their endeavours.

The Rev. R. H. U. Bloor (Exeter) said they should consider the question of both civil and religious liberty a little more fully than they had done. The political and religious horizon at the present moment showed them that neither was very firmly established. They should use their liberty so as to be sure that it was something more than a word.

Mr. William Hall (the President) occupied the chair at the business meeting at three o'clock, when a resolution was moved expressing deep grief at the loss which had befallen the nation by the death of the King, and expressing loyalty to his successor coupled with a prayer for the prosperity and honour of his reign. The Rev. R. H. U. Bloor (Exeter) seconded the resolution, which was approved by the assembly, all standing.

The President, in his address, remarked that it had been humorously said that wherever they found two Unitarians assembled, there three opinions were sure to be found. As a church without a fixed creed, it was said they lacked that coherence which was found in creed-bound churches. On the surface this might seem to be so, but he doubted if in reality the unity was as great as it seemed.

The sixty-fourth annual report was subsequently read and adopted, and the officers and committee for the coming year elected.

In the evening a public meeting was held in the Old Meeting House. A resolution of welcome to the Rev. Jas. Harwood, B.A., delegate from the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, was proposed by the President, and seconded by the Rev. J. Worthington, B.A. (Cullompton). Mr. Harwood responding. Addresses followed. The Rev. C. E. Pike (Bridgwater) spoke on "How to promote social intercourse and fellowship among the Churches." The Rev. R. H. U. Bloor (Exeter) addressed the meeting relative to contemporary thought and old foundations. Rev. C. E. Jewell (Crediton) also spoke.

The following message of condolence has been forwarded to His Majesty King George V.: "The minister and congregation of the Theistic Church in London, with profound homage, desire to offer to His Majesty the King their deep sympathy in this time of trouble. They would fain offer also their most heartfelt loyalty and assurance of their faithful allegiance, praying God to bless and protect His Majesty and his beloved Queen and family, to stand by their side in all dangers, and to grant to the King a long and happy reign." A message of sympathy has also been sent to Her Majesty the Queen-Mother.

## NEWS OF THE CHURCHES.

**Special Notice to Correspondents.**—Items of news for this column should be sent immediately after the event, and should reach the office on Wednesday, except in the case of meetings held too late in the week to make this possible.

**London and South-Eastern Counties Provincial Assembly.**—At the monthly meeting of the Committee of the Provincial Assembly of London and the South-Eastern Counties, held on the 11th inst., on the motion of the President, Mr. James S. Beale, the following resolution was passed by the members in silence, all standing:—"That this Committee representing fifty-four non-subscribing congregations constituting the Provincial Assembly of London and the South-Eastern Counties, desires to record its grief at the National loss which the United Kingdom has sustained by the death of His Majesty King Edward the Seventh; its loyal and respectful sympathy with the Queen-Mother and all the Royal Family in their bereavement, and its earnest hope for the life, health and prosperity of His Majesty King George the Fifth." A copy of this resolution has since been forwarded to the Home Secretary.

**London District Unitarian Society.**—We are asked to call attention to the annual meeting which will be held at Essex Hall on Wednesday next at 8 p.m. Mr. Percy Preston will take the chair, and Mr. John Ward, M.P., and several others are announced to speak.

**Bolton District Sunday School Union (Unitarian).**—The Annual United Scholars' Services were held on Sunday in the chapels, Bank-street, Bolton, and Chowbent, when, despite the inclement weather, there was a large attendance of teachers and scholars from the various schools of the district at each chapel. At Bolton, Rev. J. Islan Jones, B.A., of Bolton, conducted the service, and Mr. Lawrence Redfern, of Home Missionary College, Manchester, gave the address, in which he impressed the great importance of work in Sunday-schools. At Chowbent, Rev. Bertram Lister, M.A., conducted the service, and Mr. S. Crook, of Bolton, delivered the address. Special music was also rendered at each service.

**London: Islington.**—A lantern lecture will be given by Rev. W. Tudor Jones, Ph.D., F.R.G.S., on "The Wonders of New Zealand," in Unity Church schoolroom, on Tuesday, May 24, at 8 p.m. Admission free. A collection will be taken.

**Newchurch: Bethlehem Unitarian Church.**—On Saturday, May 7, a large congregation assembled at a service of commemoration, when three memorial windows were unveiled, and a sermon was preached by the Rev. H. Enfield Dowson, president of the National Conference. Mr. Andrew Ashworth, of Stacksteads, one of the oldest members of the congregation, performed the first ceremony, the unveiling of a window in commemoration of the centenary of the church. Mr. Ashworth Law then unveiled a window to Mr. Joshua Trickett and members of his family. Mr. Maden Clegg, St. Anne's-on-Sea, unveiled the memorial to the memory of the late Mr. John Bentley, of Southport, who was formerly a Sunday-school scholar and a member of the congregation at Bethlehem Church. Mrs.



Bentley is the donor of the window. The minister, Rev. J. Shaw Brown, in receiving the gifts, said that he desired to assure the givers that it would be the constant care of those in authority to preserve and protect them for all time. Emerson said somewhere that great statues and paintings in private houses had got into the wrong place, and should be removed to where they could teach the people their lesson of truth and beauty. Such a place, it seemed to him, was the building where people met from week to week for public worship. "I am glad, therefore," he added, "that it has come into your hearts to beautify and adorn this old chapel on the hill with the outward and visible signs of your loving faithfulness and kindly thoughtfulness, and I trust that in the days to come they will help our faith, nourish in us reverence, and carry us into that Presence where is fulness of joy." The Rev. H. Enfield Dowson then delivered his address, in which he made some interesting references to the work of their churches in the past. A public meeting, which was largely attended, was held in the evening, Mr. C. W. Hitchen, president of the church, being in the chair.

**West Kirby: Opening of New Church.**—On Wednesday evening the new meeting room of the West Kirby Free Church was opened for public worship. Hitherto the congregation has met in the lower Tynwald Hall, but, circumstances having arisen which precluded a continuance to this arrangement, a special effort was made by the minister and members of the church to provide a building of their own. With the kind assistance of many outside friends, sufficient funds were guaranteed to erect a wood and iron building, and a site was found on the land of the Public Hall Company. The interior of the new meeting-room presents a very neat and comfortable appearance. It is well lighted, ventilated, and heated. A very fine organ, obtained at a nominal figure from Bootle Church, adds to the attractions of the new edifice. On Wednesday evening, May 11, the new church was opened. At 6.30 the Rev. H. W. Hawkes, the minister of the church, gave a brief explanatory statement of its origin and progress, after which the doors were unlocked and the people entered. The south door was unlocked by the Rev. J. C. Odgers, B.A., President of the Liverpool District Missionary Association, and the north door by Mrs. Latta, representing the congregation. The room was filled to overflowing in a few moments, very many failing to find seats, and some not even standing room. A dedicatory prayer was offered by the minister and a hymn sung, which concluded the preliminary service. A selection of sacred music was played on the organ by Mr. Mount, Bootle, until the appointed time for the evening service arrived. The Rev. H. D. Roberts, of Hope-street Church, read the first lesson, and the Rev. C. Craddock, of the Ancient Chapel of Toxteth, read the second lesson and offered prayer. An impressive sermon was preached by the Rev. J. C. Odgers, B.A., of Ullet-road Church. The preacher took for his text the words, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua xxiv. 15). "To-day," he said, "we dedicate to the service of the Almighty this house of prayer, in the steadfast hope that those who meet here from Sunday to Sunday may serve the Lord by intellect, by conscience, by the spirit, and by service to their fellows. In love to God and love to man we find the central principle of the Gospel of Christ. May this place be a real religious home for all who come here to worship God the Spirit in spirit and in truth, and may each worshipper be able to say with true earnestness of purpose and full understanding of the promise made, 'As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord!'" A closing prayer and the benediction, by the Rev. H. W. Hawkes, concluded the service.

## NOTES AND JOTTINGS.

At the annual assembly of the Congregational Union last week the secretary announced that there are signs of some arrest of the decline of the past few years. But the figures are hardly encouraging, and must, we fear, be confessed to be typical of most churches in face of an expanding population. The number of churches returned for 1909 is 4,666, as against 4,652 in 1908. In the same period there is an increase in Sunday-school scholars of 2,604. Church membership, however, shows a decline of 2,534. In this connection it should be borne in mind that, comparing the figures of 1909 with those of 1905, the year before the Welsh revival, there is an increase of 15,694 members. The feature of the year was the successful inauguration of the Central Fund scheme. Already £128,449 has been promised towards the £250,000 aimed at before 1913.

MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE reached her 90th year on May 13, and among the congratulations which she received was the following telegram from King George:—"On the occasion of your 90th birthday I offer you my heartfelt congratulations, and trust that you are in good health." Miss Nightingale is now an invalid, and has for some time passed ceased to take an active interest in public affairs owing to her advancing years; but her health continues to be good, and she is very cheerful.

A RETURN of the number of votes recorded at the recent election of Guardians has been issued by the London County Council. The number of electors on the register is 793,235. Where there were contests the number of electors was 432,913, but of these only 94,249 voted, the percentage being 21·8, showing a decrease on the figures of the 1907 elections, when 28·1 voted. Compared with other recent London elections the proportion is very small, the percentage in the Parliamentary election being 84·3, Borough Council 50·9, County Councils 51·0, while the fact that 413 guardians out of 815 (50·7 per cent.) were returned unopposed is another indication of apathy. The highest percentages of voting occurred in Poplar, 30·1, and St. George-in-the-East, 41·7; the lowest in Hampstead, 7·7, Paddington, 7·9, and the City of London, 9·6.

IN the course of an interesting lecture on "The Sikh Religion," delivered on May 12 by Mr. M. A. Macauliffe at Kensington Town Hall, the lecturer expressed his opinion that Sikhism offers fewer points of attack than any other theological system, and if patronised and cherished as its religious and political importance deserves by a powerful Government, it might become one of the first religions on this planet, but under a Government policy of what is called "religious neutrality," the Sikhs are not only reverting to Hinduism, but embracing the cult of Atheism, if not the baneful political practices attendant thereon.

GURU NANAK, the founder of the Sikh religion, was born as late as the year 1469 of our era, and his religion, while in many respects superior to all others, lacks the glamour of antiquity which so engages the attention of the archaeological student. Guru Nanak's people belonged to what would be called in this country the farming class, but his father was also a village accountant, a very useful and helpful official in Indian administration. His village, now called Nankana, in honour of the great man to whom it had the honour of giving birth, lay deep in a vast and lonely forest in the south-western corner of what is now the British district of Lahore.

ARRANGEMENTS have been made for about 200 Russian teachers to visit London this

summer in parties of fifty. Interpreters will accompany each party round the London schools, and lectures explanatory of English educational systems will be delivered in Russian. The tour has been organised by an Educational Society in Moscow, and after spending a fortnight in London each party will visit Brussels for another fortnight, and also, if possible, spend a week in Germany.

MEMORIES of the strenuous efforts which were made to save Crosby Hall from destruction will be awakened by the announcement that a pageant play is to be arranged, to meet that part of the cost of the re-erection of the building which has not been covered by private donations. It is not perhaps generally known that the fine old Hall has been incorporated in the new group of academic buildings which are to form a hostel for students of the London University at More's Gardens, Chelsea. The Hall has been rebuilt as nearly as possible in its original form, and will be used for lectures or as a meeting place in connection with the University settlement, and the public will doubtless be given access to it from time to time.

ALL over the Australasian States, according to the *Australasian Review of Reviews*, there are indications of a growing conscience with regard to the reformation of criminals. The terrible punishment of solitary confinement, which is often used by judges, even in cases of crime committed by children of tender age, is likely to be abolished, and in Victoria the creation of children's courts has been attended with most satisfactory results. New Zealand is contemplating a further step. The release of the prisoner will now, it is proposed, depend entirely upon his own efforts at rehabilitation. There will be provided penitentiaries for male prisoners, institutions for perverts and criminals of unsound mind, an institution for incorrigible drunkards, prison camps for men, reformatory farm penitentiaries, and a reformatory for women. It is intended that during the whole of his waking time the prisoner will be kept employed in industrial or educational work, or in proper exercise. The classification of prisoners will be according to types.

THE *Anglo-Russian* refers, in an article on "The Tragedy of Russian Mothers," to some letters written by Madame Breshkovsky in prison to her son, which have been published in a New York magazine. Copies of these letters were obtained by a devoted friend of Mme. Breshkovsky's, Mrs. Barrows, wife of the head of the American Prison Commission, who did her best to persuade the brave woman not to return to her own country after visiting the United States to raise funds for the revolutionary cause, but without avail. The letters in question were, of course, written under the rigid scrutiny of the prison officials, but they throw much light upon the heroic personality of the writer.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL, of New Hampshire, U.S.A., is at present on a visit to England. Many people who know him as a novelist are probably unaware that, like his English namesake, he has taken to politics, and is one of the leaders in the great movement in the United States to emancipate American politics from the control of purely business interests. The Churchills are descended from old Dorset stock. John Churchill, son of Jasper Churchill, landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1641, being one of the many pilgrims who left the old country on account of their religious convictions. Mr. Winston Churchill does not himself believe that the Puritan emigration was due wholly to religious motives. He thinks that a distaste for too much Government had something to do with it.



## London District Unitarian Society.

### THE ANNUAL MEETING

will be held at  
**Essex Hall, Essex Street, W.C.**  
on  
**Wednesday, May 25, 1910, at 8 p.m.**

#### Speakers:

PERCY PRESTON, Esq. (President),  
JOHN WARD, Esq., M.P.,  
F. R. NOTT, Esq., LL.B.,  
REV. L. JENKINS JONES,  
REV. A. A. CHARLESWORTH,  
and others.

Tea and Coffee at 7.30 p.m.

RONALD BARTRAM, *Hon. Sec.*

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## GENERAL BAPTIST ASSEMBLY.

### 257th ANNUAL GATHERING

OF THE ABOVE WILL BE HELD IN THE

### EAST GATE CHAPEL, CHICHESTER.

On Wednesday, the 1st June, at 7 p.m., the Annual Assembly Sermon will be preached by the Rev. C. A. Ginever, B.A., of Dover. At the close of this Service, a brief Communion Service will be conducted by Rev. A. J. Marchant.

On Thursday, the 2nd June, at 10 o'clock, a.m., a Devotional Service.

At 10.30 a.m., the President's Address by the Rev. George Lansdown, of Billingshurst.

At 11 a.m., Business Meeting.

At 12.30 noon, Luncheon will be provided, at which W. Walker, Esq., J.P., C.C., of Trowbridge, will preside.

At 3 p.m., the Business Meeting resumed.

At 7.15 p.m., a Public Meeting, at which the Right Worshipful the Mayor of Chichester (G. M. Turnbull, Esq., J.P.) will preside, supported by Mr. Alderman Holt (Deputy Mayor), Mrs. Ginever, C. R. W. Offen, Esq., of London, and others.

TEA will be provided on Wednesday and Thursday at Messrs. ROGERS' Restaurant at 5.30.



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